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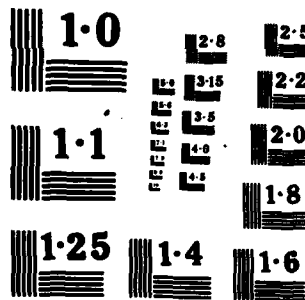
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# SOUTHEAST ASIA:

A Conference Sponsored by  
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Center for Strategic and International Studies  
Georgetown University  
Washington, D.C.



## A CONFERENCE REPORT

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**SOUTHEAST ASIA:  
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

A Conference Sponsored by  
The Defense Intelligence College  
in association with  
The World Power and Pacific Program  
The Center for Strategic and International Studies  
Georgetown University

December 4-5, 1984

Defense Intelligence Analysis Center  
Defense Intelligence College  
Bolling Air Force Base  
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#### Steering Group

Ray S. Cline, Director, World Power and Pacific Program and Senior Associate, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University.

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Douglas A. Ruane, Acting Director of Academic Research, Defense Intelligence College.

Jay J. Sloan, Defense Intelligence Officer for East Asia and the Pacific, Defense Intelligence Agency.

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World Power and Pacific Program, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University:

Dora Alves, Marjorie Wilson Cline, Dong Ta, and Bette Valenti.

Conference Coordinator:

Steven R. Dorr, Defense Intelligence College, Academic Research Center.

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## **SOUTHEAST ASIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

A CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE COLLEGE  
in association with  
THE WORLD POWER AND PACIFIC PROGRAM, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

DECEMBER 4-5, 1984

AUDITORIUM  
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS CENTER  
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE COLLEGE  
Bolling Air Force Base  
Washington, D.C.

\*\*\*\*\*

Tuesday, December 4, 1984

8:00 AM Registration

9:15 AM Welcoming Remarks

Major General William E. Cooper, Jr., USA,  
Deputy Director for Foreign Intelligence,  
Defense Intelligence Agency

9:30 AM PANEL I: Cambodia and World Power  
Involvement in Southeast Asia

Moderator: Richard T. Childress, National  
Security Council

Speakers: Larry A. Niksch, Asian Affairs  
Specialist, Congressional Research Service,  
Library of Congress, "Vietnam and ASEAN:  
Conflict and Negotiation over Cambodia"

Evelyn Colbert, The Johns Hopkins University,  
School of Advanced International Studies, "The  
Great Powers and Cambodia"

Nathaniel Thayer, The Johns Hopkins University,  
School of Advanced International Studies,  
"Japanese Influence on Southeast Asia"

Discussant: Michael Dent Eiland, Defense  
Intelligence Agency



12:00 noon Adjourn for lunch

2:00 PM PANEL II: Leadership, Legitimacy, and Succession in Southeast Asia

Moderator: Donald E. Weatherbee, University of South Carolina

Speakers: Benjamin N. Muego, Bolling Green State University, "Leadership, Legitimacy, and Succession: The Case of the Philippines"

Fred R. von der Mehden, Rice University, "Succession and Legitimacy in Malaysia"

Dwight Y. King, Northern Illinois University, "Dynamic Tendencies in Indonesia's Authoritarian Regime"

Discussant: Timothy W. Wright, Senior Southeast Asia Analyst/Filipinist, Intelligence Center Pacific, Honolulu, Hawaii

7:00 PM Reception - Cash Bar: Bolling Air Force Base, Officer's Club, Washington, D.C.

8:00 PM Banquet: Bolling Air Force Base, Officer's Club, Washington, D.C.

9:00 PM Banquet Address: The Honorable Marshall Green, Former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia

Wednesday, December 5, 1984

9:00 AM PANEL III: The Current and Future Role of the Military in Southeast Asia

Moderator: Stephen B. Young, Hamline University

Speakers: Douglas Pike, University of California at Berkeley, "The People's Army of Vietnam Today"

David I. Steinberg, U.S. Agency for International Development, "The Role of the Military in Burmese Politics"

Clark D. Neher, Northern Illinois University,  
"The Role of the Military in Thai Politics"

Discussant: Jeffrey D. Baker, Carroll College

Noon Adjourn for Lunch

2:00 PM Diplomatic Forum: Key Issues and Future  
Prospects of the ASEAN States

Moderator: Jon A. Wiant, Deputy Director,  
Office of Intelligence Liaison, U.S. Department  
of State

Speakers:

His Excellency Pengiran Haji Idriss, Ambassador  
of Brunei Darussalam.

The Honorable Abdul Kadir, Deputy Chief of  
Mission of the Embassy of Malaysia.

The Honorable Sakthip Krairiksh, Minister-  
Counselor (Deputy Chief of Mission) of the Royal  
Thai Embassy.

His Excellency Kishore Mahbubani, Permanent  
Representative of Singapore to the United  
Nations.

The Honorable Pudijanto Sadarjoen, Deputy  
Chief of Mission of the Embassy of the Republic  
of Indonesia.

The Honorable Rolando S. Gregorio, Second  
Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of the  
Philippines.

4:00 PM Closing Remarks.

Ray S. Cline, Director, World Power and Pacific  
Program and Senior Associate, The Center for  
Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown  
University.

**SPEAKERS**  
**Southeast Asia Conference**  
**December 4-5, 1984**

\*\*\*\*\*

**JEFFREY D. BAKER** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics and Business Administration at Carroll College in Helena, Montana. Professor Baker's military career included duties as a pilot and service as an associate professor of economics at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He was stationed as the Senior Air Force representative to the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma. Prior to his professorship at Carroll College, Dr. Baker served as the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs at the Defense Intelligence College in Washington, D.C.

**RICHARD T. CHILDRESS** is Director of the Political-Military Affairs branch of the National Security Council which is responsible for security and foreign assistance, Southeast Asia, and international refugees. While an active duty officer, he served as Executive Officer in the Office of Strategic Plans and Policy at the Pentagon and as Asian Desk Officer for politico-military affairs. Highly decorated, he served as Foreign Area Officer in Thailand and has been stationed in Vietnam, Korea, and Europe.

**RAY S. CLINE** is Senior Associate, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, where he directs the World Power and Pacific Program. During his career of more than 30 years of government service, he served as Deputy Director for Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, and Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State. An expert in Asian affairs, Dr. Cline has written and lectured extensively on the subject. With his wife Marjorie Wilson Cline he wrote "The Communist Five and the Capitalist Ten: Socio-Economic Systems in Asia," the Korean Journal of East Asian Affairs, Spring/Summer 1982 and "Island Fortress of Freedom," an essay on Taiwan in The American Legion Magazine, August 1983.

**EVELYN COLBERT**, a professorial lecturer at the Edwin O. Reischauer Center at the School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, has had a distinguished career with the State Department, most recently serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Dr. Colbert earned her degree at Columbia University and is widely published in the area of Asian affairs. Dr. Colbert is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Studies Center of the Pennsylvania State University and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Japan American Society of Washington, the Advisory Committee of the Washington Center of the Asia Society, and serves on the U.S. National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation.

**WILLIAM E. COOPER, Jr.**, a Major General in the United States Army, is Deputy Director for Foreign Intelligence, Defense Intelligence Agency. General Cooper has had a distinguished career serving in such high

positions as Commanding General of the 32nd Army Air Defense Command, Europe, and as Chief of Staff of the North American Air Defense Command at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado. He holds two masters degrees, in international affairs and history, and has attended the U.S. Army War College.

**MICHAEL DENT EILAND**, a Colonel in the United States Army, is currently the Chief of the East Asia and Pacific Division, Directorate for Estimates, Defense Intelligence Agency. Previously, Col. Eiland was the Director of the Khmer Emergency Group for the American Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand, and a political-military officer in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs at the Department of State. His article, "Kampuchea in 1984: Yet Further From Peace," appeared in the January 1985 issue of Asian Survey.

**MARSHALL GREEN**, currently President of the Japan-American Society and consultant to the Department of State, has been a distinguished Foreign Service Officer for more than 35 years. Ambassador Green has served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Korea, Consul General in Hong Kong, and Ambassador to Indonesia. He was twice appointed to be the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Green was then called on to serve as ambassador to the countries of Australia and Nauru. He was designated Coordinator of Population Affairs, a position established to review and promote U.S. policy on global population issues. Green was named to be the Head of the Delegation to the U.N. Population Commission in 1977 and 1979.

**ROLANDO S. GREGORIO** is a Second Secretary at the Philippine Embassy. Before his assignment in Washington, he was a Principal Assistant at the ASEAN Affairs Office and Director for Ceremonials at the Protocol Office in the Philippine Foreign Ministry. A member of the Philippine Bar, he taught Commercial Law at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and Political Science at the Lyceum University of the Philippines where he obtained his Foreign Service and Law degrees.

**PENGIRAN HAJI IDRIS** presented his Letter of Credence to President Reagan on March 13, 1984, which designated him as the first Ambassador from Brunei Darussalam. His Excellency was educated in Brunei, Sarawak, and Australia, and he did post-graduate work in development at the University of Cambridge, England. Prior to his appointment as Ambassador to the United States, he was seconded to the Diplomatic Service and served in Singapore and London.

**ABDUL KADIR** is currently posted at the Embassy of Malaysia in Washington as the Deputy Chief of Mission. Before coming to the United States, Abdul Kadir served as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kuala Lumpur. He has also held assignments at Malaysian missions in Vietnam, to the United Nations, and to the European Community.

**DWIGHT KING** is Associate Professor of Political Science at Northern Illinois University specializing in comparative politics and political economy, with regional focus on Southeast Asia. Prior to receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1978, Dr. King did field research on socio-economic stratification and state-society linkages in Indonesia. Since 1981 he has made four trips which total 18 months spent in Indonesia as an institutional specialist for the U.S. Agency for International Development. His publications include "Regime Type and Performance," Comparative Political Studies (1981); "Associational Activity and Political Participation of Villagers in West Java, Indonesia," Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science (1983); and a forthcoming article entitled "Modelling Contemporary Indonesian Politics."

**SAKTHIP KRAIRIKSH** is a career diplomat posted in Washington as Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister-Counselor of the Royal Thai Embassy. Prior to this assignment, he was Secretary to the Foreign Minister of Thailand and served as the Director of the Office of Policy and Planning of the Foreign Ministry of the Kingdom of Thailand.

**KISHORE MAHBUBANI** is currently serving as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations in New York. Prior to his present appointment in August 1984, Mr. Mahbubani served as Charge d'Affaires in Phnom Penh, Counsellor in Kuala Lumpur, and Minister-Counsellor/Deputy Chief of Mission in Washington, D.C. Mr. Mahbubani's publications include "The Kampuchean Problem: A Southeast Asian Perception," Foreign Affairs, Winter 1983-84; and "Cambodia: Myths and Realism," Problems of Communism, July/August 1984.

**BENJAMIN N. MUEGO** is the author of The Philippines Under Martial Rule: A Spectator Society, and the forthcoming Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific (co-author, David Wurfel). Currently an Assistant Professor at Bowling Green State University, Muego received his Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He is also an Adjunct Lecturer at the School of Area Studies, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State.

**CLARK D. NEHER** serves as the Chairman of the Political Science Department of Northern Illinois University. Comparative Politics and Southeast Asia were the areas of specialization for his Ph.D. work at University of California at Los Angeles. Dr. Neher has gone on to write numerous well-known works in the area, among them: Politics in Southeast Asia (1981) and Modern Thai Politics: From Village to Nation (1979). His latest work in progress is Political Clientelism in Thailand.

**LARRY A. NIKSCH** is currently serving as a specialist in Asian Affairs at the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Having received his Ph.D. in International Affairs from Georgetown University in 1976, Dr. Niksch's recent research is focused on the U. S. military position in the Western Pacific, Japanese defense policy, internal conditions in the Philippines, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

**DOUGLAS PIKE**, Director of the Indochina Studies Program at the University of California at Berkeley and Editor of the Indochina Chronology, is a retired Foreign Service Officer who has been posted in Saigon, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Taipei, and Seoul. He has authored many books and papers dealing with Indochina including two new full-length studies: Soviet-Vietnamese Relations 1917-1982: A Geo-Political Study, and People's Army of Vietnam.

**PUDIJANTO SADARJOEN** is currently posted in Washington as Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia after serving in the same capacity in Singapore. Previously, Minister Sadarjoen was the Director of the Center for Political Research, R & D Agency, in the Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs.

**DAVID L. STEINBERG** is a Senior Foreign Service Officer with the Agency for International Development. He is the author of Burma's Road Toward Development: Growth and Ideology Under Military Rule; Burma, A Socialist Nation of Southeast Asia, and numerous articles and monographs on Burma, Korea, and development issues in the region. He has lived in Asia for fifteen years and has recently completed a study of the effectiveness of concessional assistance in Korea for the World Bank.

**NATHANIEL THAYER** is the Director of Asian Studies at The Johns Hopkins University in the School of Advanced International Studies. His most recent government post has been the National Intelligence Officer for East Asia and the Pacific in the Central Intelligence Agency. Earlier in his career, Professor Thayer served for a decade as a foreign service officer and subsequently taught at Columbia University, the City University of New York, and at Harvard University. Professor Thayer received his Doctorate from Columbia University. He is the author of many books and articles on the domestic policy of Japan and Korea as well as international policies of East Asia.

**FRED R. von der MEHDEN**, the Albert Thomas Professor of Political Science at Rice University, has a rich background in the study and teaching of Southeast Asian affairs. He is the author of Southeast Asia 1930-1973: The Legacy of Colonialism and Nationalism and Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia. Prior to his appointment at Rice University, he was the Chairman of the East Asian Program at the University of Wisconsin. He also serves as the Editor of Rice University Studies.

**DONALD E. WEATHERBEE** teaches at the University of South Carolina where he is the Donald S. Russell Professor of Contemporary Foreign Policy. Professor Weatherbee has served at various universities over the last 25 years and has published widely on the ASEAN states. His most recent book, to be published in the coming months, is entitled: Southeast Asia Divided: The ASEAN-Indochina Crisis.

**JON A. WIA**NT is currently the Deputy Director of Intelligence Liaison for the Department of State. He received his Ph.D. in Comparative Politics of Southeast Asia from Cornell University. He has written extensively on the subject of Burmese Politics. In 1981, Dr. Wiant was the recipient of the Director of Central Intelligence Agency's Exceptional Intelligence Analyst Award.

**TIMOTHY W. WRIGHT** is assigned to the Intelligence Center Pacific (IPAC) as senior Southeast Asia Analyst and Filipinist, working under the U.S. Commander-in-Chief Pacific. As a Coast Guard officer, he was the last American commanding officer of a LORAN-A station in Palawan, Philippines. Dr. Wright received his Ph.D. from the University of Hawaii and the East-West Center in geography, with a dissertation entitled: "A Geographic Approach to Integrated Regional Conservation and Development in Calamianes, Palawan, Philippines."

**STEPHEN B. YOUNG** is the Dean of the School of Law at Hamline University. Educated at the Harvard Law School, Young served as the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs there. While at Harvard, he was a Research Associate in the East Asian Legal Studies Department and an assistant to Ellsworth Bunker in the writing of his memoirs regarding his tenure as Ambassador in Saigon. Dean Young is also the author of the soon to be released book, Virtue and Law: Human Rights in Traditional China and Vietnam.

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION

On December 4 and 5, 1984, an assembly of scholars, business representatives, U.S. Government officials, and diplomats from Asian nations met at the Defense Intelligence College for a discussion on Southeast Asia: Problems and Prospects. This conference is one of a series initiated by the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency dedicated to fostering greater understanding of the Third World by promoting open exchange of scholarly information and ideas on the political and military status of the region.

The papers presented at the conference, and published herein, offer a well-documented assessment of the interests and policies of the United States, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and Japan in Southeast Asia. They discuss the implications of these policies for the outcome of the Cambodian issue and the regional role of Vietnam. They also describe complex legitimacy and succession problems in three ASEAN states, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Finally, they deal with the unusual dual political-military role of government leaders in Vietnam, Burma, and Thailand and examine the strength and weaknesses of the armies of these three nations.

The views of the six ASEAN states were presented at a round-table discussion among representatives from these states. Their comments included an appeal to the United States to assume a more active regional role rather than leave the settlement of the Cambodian issue to the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and Vietnam.

At the evening banquet, the Honorable Marshall Green, former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia, illustrated from his many years of experience in the foreign service, how and why the deep study of political, economic, and military relations between states is so important to the successful conduct of U.S. diplomacy.

This conference was sponsored by the Defense Intelligence College in association with the World Power and Pacific Program of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University. The conferees were welcomed by Major General William E. Cooper, Jr., USA, Deputy Director for Foreign Intelligence of the Defense Intelligence Agency.



**PANEL I**

**CAMBODIA AND WORLD POWER INVOLVEMENT  
IN  
SOUTHEAST ASIA**

**Moderator: Richard T. Childress**

**PANEL I**  
**Paper One**

**VIETNAM AND ASEAN:  
CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATION OVER CAMBODIA**

by

**LARRY A. NIKSCH**  
Specialist in Asian Affairs  
Congressional Research Service

Vietnam's Objectives in Cambodia

Since the emergence of the Vietnamese communist movement, its leadership has emphasized the importance of Laos and Cambodia to Vietnam. The leadership has viewed Vietnam's links with these states in terms of a superior-subordinate relationship. This has included, in past years, the concept of a Vietnamese-dominated Indochina federation, although the present Vietnamese government denies that it intends to establish such an arrangement.

Whatever the legal form, the Vietnamese government appears to perceive relationships with Laos and Cambodia as founded on the principle that Hanoi has the primary responsibility for defining the relationships. Laos and Cambodia, in turn, are expected to follow Vietnam's lead and conform. This "special relationship" (the phrase used by Vietnamese officials) gives Vietnam control of the defense and foreign policies of Laos and Cambodia and requires these two states to develop Marxist-Leninist political and social systems parallel to those of Vietnam.

Vietnam today occupies Cambodia with an estimated 160,000 to 180,000 troops. It has installed and maintains in Phnom Penh a government led mainly by Khmer communists who defected from the Khmer Rouge after 1975 and are led by Heng Samrin. That government (The People's Republic of Kampuchea), however, has remained weak, and the Vietnamese have continued a direct role in administration. Vietnamese forces have nearly all of the responsibility for internal security, including operations against an estimated 30,000-40,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas, a force of 10,000-12,000 non-communist insurgents under the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) led by Son Sann, and about 5,000 members of the Sihanoukist National Army. Vietnam's major goals inside Cambodia appear to be the elimination of the resistance, strengthening the Phnom Penh regime, and building up a Khmer communist movement loyal to Hanoi.

Vietnam's external policies related to Cambodia have as a prime aim the elimination of Chinese influence in Indochina. China has opposed Vietnamese control of Cambodia and Laos, provided arms to the Khmer

Rouge, and occupied Vietnamese territory on the Sino-Vietnamese border during February and March 1979. Vietnam has turned to the Soviet Union for support against China. The Soviets have responded with aid, including large quantities of weapons, estimated at a minimum of \$3 million per day. Nearly 10,000 Soviet military advisers, technicians, and aviators assist the Vietnamese in Indochina. The Vietnamese, in return, have allowed Soviet naval and air units access to military bases inside Vietnam.<sup>1</sup>

Hanoi's other prime external objective is to secure international acceptance of its domination over Cambodia. This would include international recognition of the Phnom Penh regime and an end to external support of the Khmer resistance forces. This objective relates specifically to the ASEAN countries.

In short, Vietnam perceives an outcome in Cambodia as one that would reinforce its domination. It has used the word "irreversible" to describe its present control. Such an outcome would contain the following elements:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) preservation of its client government in Phnom Penh and the commanding position of pro-Vietnamese Khmer communist elements;
- (2) recognition of its client government by ASEAN, China, and the United States and admission of that government into the United Nations and other international fora;
- (3) an end to outside support to Khmer resistance groups, relating particularly to support from Thailand and China;
- (4) an end to Chinese interference in Indochina and cessation of Chinese threats to use military force against Vietnam, including Chinese agreement to sign a non-aggression pact with Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

#### ASEAN's Objectives

ASEAN's approach to the Vietnamese takeover of Cambodia is based on three objectives. First, ASEAN seeks to promote the security of Thailand against the threat of a Vietnamese attack or, in the longer term, Vietnamese efforts to promote communist insurgency and political instability. Second, ASEAN seeks to move the issue in a direction that will result in a reduction of Soviet and Chinese influence in Indochina and Southeast Asia. Finally, ASEAN wants a settlement of the issue that will result in normal relations between ASEAN and Vietnam.

The ASEAN states believe that a settlement of the Cambodia question is a necessary step toward reaching these goals, particularly a settlement that would contain the following elements:

- (1) the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia;
- (2) the establishment of an independent and neutral government; and
- (3) international guarantees for the neutrality of Cambodia.

ASEAN has had two problems in working out this kind of settlement. First, Vietnam has very different views, which create a gap that ASEAN must bridge. The differences are deep: ASEAN's desire for Vietnamese military withdrawal versus Vietnam's desire for an indefinite military presence; ASEAN's goal of an independent, neutral government in Cambodia versus Hanoi's goal of preserving the status of its client regime; and ASEAN's objective of a neutral Cambodia versus Vietnam's goal of incorporating Cambodia into an Indochina bloc allied with the USSR.

Second, ASEAN must consider the views of the other actors in this situation: China, the Soviet Union, and the United States. China presents a special problem.

#### The China Problem

ASEAN's task of bridging the gap with Vietnam is complicated by Chinese policy. China is determined to influence the outcome in Cambodia and also seeks major changes in the political orientation not only of Vietnam itself but also of Laos. Its approach, therefore, is a direct confrontation with Vietnamese policy, and it has produced differences with ASEAN's objectives and strategy.

China views the Cambodia problem as a symptom of the Soviet Union's global strategy of penetrating Third World countries and establishing "hegemony" in the form of alliances with ideologically similar governments. Vietnam plays this role in Southeast Asia as the "Cuba of the East," as the Chinese have described it. China contends that the Soviet push into Southeast Asia is intended to eliminate its influence and encircle China militarily.

China, therefore, perceives the current struggle over Cambodia as a means of rolling back the Vietnamese and forcing them to abandon their control of Laos and Cambodia and their alliance with the Soviet Union. It also views the outcome in Cambodia as important to a restoration of Chinese influence in Indochina. China believes that the attainment of these goals will require long-term military, economic, and diplomatic pressure on Vietnam in order to weaken that nation to the point of forcing changes in the policies and, possibly, the composition of the Hanoi government. China also seeks to preserve and strengthen political elements in Indochina that are subject to its influence.

The main elements of China's strategy of long-term pressure have been:

- (1) material aid, including arms, to the Khmer Rouge, with smaller amounts to the KPNLF and the Sihanouk forces;
- (2) strong support for the international legitimacy of the government of Democratic Kampuchea, originally under Pol Pot, now formally led by Khieu Samphan;
- (3) support for the coalition arrangement among the Khmer resistance groups so long as it does not place the Khmer Rouge in a subordinate position;
- (4) a military guarantee for Thailand, pledging military action against Vietnam if Vietnamese forces attack Thailand;
- (5) the exercise of strong influence on negotiations, including an effective veto over ASEAN proposals (through the relationship with Thailand) and participation in substantive negotiations;
- (6) continued military pressure on the Sino-Vietnamese border;
- (7) opposition to international economic aid to Vietnam.

China's strategy presents parallels but also differences with ASEAN. Both want the Vietnamese to *withdraw from Indochina* and Vietnam to end its support of the Soviet military presence. Conversely, ASEAN wants a Cambodia free from overt Chinese influence while China apparently seeks an enhanced role through the Khmer Rouge. Both are willing to pressure Vietnam, but ASEAN is more interested in a negotiated compromise. Thailand values the Chinese promise of aid should Vietnam attack, and the other ASEAN governments recognize that Chinese military power helps to restrain Vietnam. The other governments, however, do not want this situation to result in an inordinate Chinese influence on Thailand and, consequently, a Chinese veto on ASEAN diplomacy.

Behind these differences lay suspicions in the ASEAN states over China's goals and interests in Southeast Asia. These suspicions can be described as a view that China ultimately seeks a dominant influence over the region and is willing to interfere in the internal affairs of the states of Southeast Asia in order to attain it. Many ASEAN government officials believe that current Chinese overtures to ASEAN represent the Leninist strategy of temporary alliance with ideological adversaries for short-term gains with longer-term struggle held in abeyance until conditions change. Officials in Indonesia and Malaysia state such views openly, but their counterparts in the other ASEAN government also hold them.

#### ASEAN Strategy

ASEAN governments have developed strategy in a continuous dialogue since the Vietnamese invasion. Their strategy has political, diplomatic, economic, and military elements. General agreement on

strategy within the ASEAN framework corresponds with differences in individual government perspectives over particular elements of strategy. Nevertheless, much of ASEAN strategy represents a deference to the views of Thailand, ASEAN's front-line state. Chinese policy has influenced strategy. Finally, there is a continuous initiative-response interaction with the Vietnamese.

ASEAN strategy has four elements:

- (1) the isolation of Vietnam from international support and the refusal of the international community to recognize Vietnam's control over Cambodia;
- (2) the offer to Vietnam of negotiations in a forum most conducive to reaching a settlement based on ASEAN proposals;
- (3) the attempt to formulate settlement proposals; and
- (4) aid to the Khmer resistance forces.<sup>3</sup>

#### Isolating Vietnam

ASEAN has worked to create and maintain an international coalition of countries opposed to Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. The coalition consists of China, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, the West European countries, Canada, and numerous countries of Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. ASEAN has used the coalition in the United Nations to pass annual resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Vietnamese armed forces from Cambodia and the continued seating of the government of Democratic Kampuchea, thus denying Cambodia's seat to the Heng Samrin regime. At ASEAN's behest, members of the coalition have refused diplomatic recognition of the Heng Samrin regime, and many have boycotted trade with Vietnam.

ASEAN has struggled to maintain the coalition in the face of differing views of individual governments that could pull it apart. At one pole is China. At the other pole are France and Australia. They would like a more accommodating approach toward Vietnam, such as a relaxation of the trade boycott, and they have qualms over supporting the Democratic Kampuchean government because of the Khmer Rouge's participation.

Vietnam complicates ASEAN's problem by probing for weak spots and wooing the Australian and West European governments and political interest groups in those countries to act as intermediaries between Vietnam and ASEAN.<sup>4</sup>

#### Forum for Negotiations

ASEAN's approach has emphasized two types of negotiations: negotiations in an international conference that would include interested

parties inside and outside Southeast Asia, and bilateral discussions between individual ASEAN governments and the Vietnamese government.

Thus, in October 1980, ASEAN secured U.N. General Assembly approval for an International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK). The conference was held in July 1981, although Vietnam and the Soviet Union refused to attend.

The ICK formula has served specific purposes. U.N. resolutions and the international conference reinforce ASEAN's position that Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia is the central issue between the ASEAN states and Hanoi. They consolidate international support for the ASEAN view of a proper settlement and, in turn, isolate Vietnam from international backing.

ASEAN persuaded China to attend the conference, thus bringing Peking into a diplomatic forum. Until December 1980, the Chinese government had insisted that Vietnam withdraw its forces from Cambodia before the Chinese would participate in an international conference. Thai and Singaporean officials labored during the fall of 1980 to convince China to participate. They assured China that it would have a full role in negotiating a settlement. This was a major inducement to Peking in ASEAN's efforts to get Chinese support for the concept of a negotiated settlement.<sup>5</sup>

ASEAN has turned down Vietnam's proposals for a negotiating forum. Hanoi's proposals have called for full participation by the Heng Samrin government in an ASEAN-Indochina conference or in Bangkok-Phnom Penh talks, or at least that a regional conference be organized on the basis of an Indochina bloc and an ASEAN bloc. The major powers, according to Hanoi, could not participate in a regional conference but could be included in an enlarged conference that would ratify agreements reached in the regional negotiations.

In ASEAN's view, Vietnam's proposals would give the Heng Samrin regime a status that would weaken ASEAN's effort to isolate it and perhaps lead to greater international recognition of it. Hanoi's proposals also suggest that issues of Vietnamese troop withdrawal from Cambodia and the makeup of the Khmer government would not be the priority issues in such a negotiation. Talks at a regional conference, in Hanoi's view, would concentrate on setting up a demilitarized zone along the Thai-Cambodian border and securing Thai agreement to end support of Khmer resistance forces. A regional conference, according to Vietnam, would consider "problems of mutual concern" in Southeast Asia, thus, by implication, not solely Cambodia. Vietnamese officials have indicated that these could include the "China threat," issues like territorial disputes in the South China Sea and the U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia. Vietnam has related this concept to the ASEAN ZOPFAN proposal for a zone of peace, freedom, and neutrality, asserting that ZOPFAN should be the "basis" for ASEAN-Indochina negotiations.<sup>6</sup>

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ASEAN's opposition to a regional conference is not uniform. ASEAN is united in rejecting the participation of the Heng Samrin regime. Indonesia and Malaysia, however, would favor a regional conference if they were assured that Cambodia would receive priority attention. Thailand, on the other hand, is more sensitive to the exclusion of China from a regional conference and the possibility that a conference would take up issues related to China-Vietnam relations without Chinese participation.

Malaysia proposed to Vietnam in March 1983 a regional conference on the ASEAN governments and the governments of Vietnam and Laos. Cambodia would not be represented. Singapore and Indonesia backed this "five plus two" proposal. Vietnam responded favorably suggesting a concession by Hanoi -- although Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach stated that, even without the Heng Samrin regime, such a conference still would be between two blocs, ASEAN and Indochina.

Thai and Philippine opposition killed the proposal. Thailand reportedly acted partly in reaction to China's opposition to the "five plus two" formula. Thai officials emphasized that a comprehensive settlement required Chinese participation.<sup>7</sup> The Thai and Philippine governments argued that there was no guarantee that this kind of conference would concentrate on Cambodia or issues like troop withdrawal and the composition of the Phnom Penh government. Vietnam, they asserted, had not changed its position on these issues. Thai officials, too, rejected the concept of talks between two blocs.<sup>8</sup>

Sentiment persists, however, in favor of more flexibility on the question of a negotiating forum. The ASEAN foreign ministers, meeting in June 1983 and July 1984, did not insist on the International Conference on Kampuchea as the only acceptable negotiating forum. They also endorsed a proposal made by Thailand in April 1983 for the Thai Foreign Minister to visit Hanoi and negotiate on Cambodia if Vietnam pulled its troops back 30 kilometers from the Thai-Cambodian border. Vietnam rejected the prior condition of a troop pullback, counter-proposing that Vietnam and Thailand negotiate the issue -- and, by implication, Hanoi's proposal for a security zone on the Thai-Cambodian border.

The Thai proposal points up the countervailing pressures on Thailand from ASEAN partners and China. Thailand is unlikely to give up the advantages of the ICK unless Vietnam shows a willingness to make real concessions on the issues of troop withdrawal and the composition of the Phnom Penh government. The Thai government undoubtedly would want such assurances in order to persuade China to support such a shift, especially since it spent much diplomatic effort in inducing China to support the ICK formula in the first place.

China demonstrated its rejection of talks outside the ICK framework when, in October 1984, it reportedly opposed a French move to arrange a meeting between Prince Norodom Sihanouk and an official of the Heng Samrin regime. At least some ASEAN governments had started



to lean toward making Sihanouk the focal point of negotiations as a means of breaking the impasse.

#### Settlement Terms

ASEAN has tried to offer settlement proposals to Vietnam that were flexible enough to produce a positive response from Hanoi but without creating opposition from China. This has proven difficult.

Two issues dominate the settlement process: Vietnamese troop withdrawal and the composition of the Phnom Penh government. On the troop withdrawal issue, ASEAN has taken the formal position that Vietnam must withdraw all of its forces from Cambodia. It is clear, however, that ASEAN does not expect an immediate Vietnamese withdrawal in the initial stage of settlement but rather a phased withdrawal implemented in stages as other facets of a settlement are put in place. This would include the entry of a peacekeeping force to maintain law and order and prevent any of the competing Khmer factions from seizing control by force. Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi Sawetsila said in June 1981 that the process of Vietnamese withdrawal could take one to two years as peacekeeping forces moved in.<sup>9</sup> Siddhi's position was reflected later in the June 1981 ASEAN foreign ministers meeting, which called for the withdrawal of foreign forces "in the shortest time possible" under the supervision of U.N. forces.

The ASEAN view appears to conceive a phased withdrawal partially in geographic terms. A joint statement by the ASEAN foreign ministers on September 22, 1983, proposed partial withdrawals on a territorial basis. Vietnamese forces presumably would withdraw first from the Thai border region, then back to the Mekong River in central Cambodia, and finally back to the Vietnamese border.

A key question is whether, as a card to play in negotiations, ASEAN would accept something less than total withdrawal. The concept of phased withdrawal could have partial withdrawal as one outcome if other parts of a settlement were not fully implemented. A residual Vietnamese military presence also could be negotiated as a guarantee for the position of the Heng Samrin faction in a political arrangement for power-sharing in Phnom Penh. The Indonesian government apparently favored such a plan at least during the early part of 1980 under its concept of preventing a new inflow of Chinese influence into Cambodia. Jusuf Wanandi, Director of Jakarta's influential Center for Strategic and International Studies, suggested that Vietnam should withdraw "a large portion" of its troops "especially from the Thai-Cambodian border."<sup>10</sup> Malaysian officials also reportedly were interested in the idea of partial withdrawal. Most recently, Indonesian officials have proposed that Vietnamese troops could be part of an international peacekeeping force in Cambodia. This likely represents a continued interest in a partial withdrawal formula.

On the other hand, the concept of partial withdrawal within ASEAN differs from the version put forth by Vietnam. A partial withdrawal would have to involve sizable numbers of Vietnamese troops and would have to be at least to the line of Mekong. Indonesian officials, for example, rejected the Indochina foreign minister's proposal of July 1980 on the basis that creation of a demilitarized zone on the Thai-Cambodia border and Vietnamese proposals of a partial withdrawal would leave Vietnamese forces too close to the Thai border.<sup>11</sup>

Vietnam has offered a partial troop withdrawal if Thailand ends support to the Khmer resistance groups. Hanoi has stated that a total withdrawal depends on steps by China to end its "threat" against Vietnam and the elimination of the Pol Pot group. Observers who are knowledgeable about Vietnamese thinking indicate that Vietnam's concept of a partial withdrawal involves a small portion of its troops -- a maximum of 60,000 -- and a pullback of only ten to twenty miles from the Thai border. Most importantly, Vietnamese officials have stressed that the timing and scope of troop withdrawals are conditional upon the ability of the Phnom Penh regime to govern the country and maintain security. Top Vietnamese officials have said that this could take five to ten years.

This last point suggests the crux of the settlement issue, that of political power in Phnom Penh. Vietnam's linkage of withdrawal to the stability of its client regime contrasts sharply with the reported position of Malaysian officials in 1980 that ASEAN's acceptance of a partial Vietnamese withdrawal would depend on Hanoi's acceptance of a coalition government in Phnom Penh.

The future of the Khmer government has involved perhaps the basic gap between ASEAN's views and those of Vietnam and China. ASEAN wants a government in Phnom Penh that would have at least some independence from Vietnam and yet would not allow undue Chinese influence to seep back into Cambodia. Such a government, in ASEAN's view, should not pose a threat to Cambodia's neighbors. These criteria are the core elements of ASEAN's definition of a neutral, independent Cambodia.

The ASEAN foreign ministers' June 1981 proposal called for the establishment of a "temporary administration" under U.N. auspices pending free elections supervised by the United Nations. ASEAN country officials state that an independent, neutral government could be a coalition arrangement representing the main factions inside Cambodia: the Heng Samrin administration, the Khmer Rouge, the Khmer People's National Liberation Front under Son Sann, and the Sihanouk faction. In July 1984, the ASEAN foreign minister formally endorsed Prince Sihanouk's call for a "national reconciliation among all Cambodian factions." Because the Heng Samrin group and the Khmer Rouge are tied to Vietnam and China respectively, ASEAN believes that a prominent role for the non-communists would best guarantee future stability. A free, electoral process would accomplish this, according to ASEAN government officials.

In addition, they favor arrangements under which Pol Pot and other top Khmer Rouge leaders would go into exile. Son Sann's KPNLF originally proposed this in 1980 and 1981 before he entered into a coalition with the Khmer Rouge. ASEAN governments dissuaded Son Sann from pressing the point at that time, but they now have come out for it.

Vietnam has rejected the ASEAN concept of a coalition government in Phnom Penh. It constantly describes the status of the Heng Samrin administration as "irreversible." Hanoi spokesmen often ridicule Sihanouk and Son Sann. Vietnamese officials sometimes have hinted, including recently, that they might accept some participation from these individuals in the Phnom Penh government. Sihanouk is mentioned most often in this regard.<sup>12</sup> Vietnam's meaning, however, is a participation subordinate to the Heng Samrin faction.

Hanoi's call for the "elimination" of the Pol Pot faction has some similarity to the position favored by ASEAN, and Vietnam has stressed this position recently. Vietnamese Foreign Minister Thach has stated that elimination would include "all the leaders" of the Khmer Rouge but that others "can be admitted" back into Khmer society. However, ASEAN apparently still envisages a Khmer Rouge entity in a settlement while Vietnam sees no entity of any kind operating independently of the Heng Samrin regime.

Vietnam's stance on this issue probably is the key to achieving a settlement anywhere near the concept favored by ASEAN. Vietnam cannot withdraw troops so long as it seeks to keep the Heng Samrin administration as the sole government in Cambodia. Hanoi's client is not strong enough to stand without the presence of sizable Vietnamese forces, and it is unlikely to gain a capacity to govern independently for a long time to come, if ever. The only other conceivable arrangement for the Heng Samrin faction to remain viable would be a negotiated coalition.

China has objected to ASEAN's proposals for a neutral government in Phnom Penh although it voices support for the principle of a neutral Cambodia. China opposed ASEAN proposals at the July 1981 U.N. conference on Cambodia and prevented their inclusion in the conference's final resolution. Chinese diplomats argued at the time that ASEAN proposals to disarm the Khmer factions, establish a temporary administration, and hold free elections would violate the legality of the Khmer Rouge's claim. Peking continues to back the Khmer Rouge. It has criticized the idea of participation by the Heng Samrin faction in a post-settlement government. Chinese officials reportedly have talked of a permanent coalition -- thus guaranteeing a strong role for the Khmer Rouge, and Deng Xiaoping warned in October 1984 against any attempt to remove Pol Pot and dismantle the Khmer Rouge.<sup>13</sup>

#### Support for the Khmer Resistance Forces

A decision to support Khmer resistance forces has constituted one of the key elements of the ASEAN response to Vietnam's invasion. This

initially focused on the Khmer Rouge, which regrouped in western Cambodia and fielded guerrilla forces estimated now to number 30,000 to 40,000. China and Thailand provided material support. China supplied arms and equipment, most of which passed through Thailand. The Thai government and army gave tacit cooperation to the Chinese, and they allowed Khmer Rouge units to have sanctuary on the Thai side of the border. The Khmer Rouge also had access to internationally sponsored aid to the thousands of Khmer refugees who fled to the border region.

This kind of aid has continued. However, since 1980, ASEAN leaders have promoted a role for Khmer non-communist elements under Son Sann and Sihanouk. Several motives have governed ASEAN policymakers. ASEAN leaders have been reluctant to support politically a Khmer Rouge regime, whose rule during the 1975-1978 period led to the killing and death of one to three million Khmer. They also realized that many U.N. members, including the United States and other Western countries, would not support the Khmer Rouge indefinitely as the occupant of Cambodia's seat. China's association with the Khmer Rouge also worried the governments of Malaysia and Indonesia. Finally, they concluded that a viable non-communist resistance not only could add an element of pressure on Vietnam inside Cambodia by appealing to Khmer nationalism but also could give Hanoi assurance that a negotiated compromise would not result in the re-emergence of a Khmer Rouge government in Phnom Penh.

The extension of political support to Son Sann and Sihanouk has encountered obstacles posed by China and the Khmer Rouge. An ASEAN-endorsed proposal by Singapore in November 1981 called for a new Khmer government with Sihanouk as head of state, Son Sann as prime minister, and a new structure limiting the Khmer Rouge's role and taking from it supervision of foreign affairs. Each group would continue to maintain separate political and military organizations.

The Khmer Rouge rejected the Singapore proposal in January 1982. It held that the structure of the Democratic Kampuchea government must be preserved, that each group must have equal representation, and that decisions should be made by consensus.

China backed the Khmer Rouge's hardened position and warned ASEAN against any coalition formula that would weaken the Khmer Rouge. The Chinese government became more critical of Son Sann in early 1982, accusing him of trying to destroy the structure of Democratic Kampuchea, and it warned ASEAN against any political settlement with Vietnam that weakened the Khmer Rouge.<sup>14</sup> (As stated previously, recent Chinese statements suggest that Peking has not softened its backing of the Khmer Rouge.)

The pessimistic outlook for a coalition changed in June 1982 when Son Sann and Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan negotiated an agreement, reportedly under the auspices of Thai army officers. The agreement provided for a new government structure with Prince Sihanouk

as president, Son Sann as prime minister, and Khieu Samphan as vice president. The agreement incorporated the Khmer Rouge principles of equal representation and decision by consensus. The Khmer Rouge kept control of the important foreign affairs function. The accord permitted each faction to retain its separate identity and receive international aid.

The governments of Singapore and Malaysia asserted that a coalition government was a necessary condition for increased material assistance to the non-communists, including aid from non-ASEAN governments. Singapore officials indicated that they had the United States and other Western countries especially in mind. Malaysian officials also have voiced this view. Foreign Minister Ghazali Shafie stated at the ASEAN foreign ministers' conference in December 1981 that a way must be found to give the non-communists "beef and teeth."

Singapore and Malaysia have supported a military buildup of the Khmer non-communists. Singapore has supplied arms to the KPNLF and the Sihanoukist National Army (ANS), and Malaysia reportedly has trained KPNLF troops. Indonesia appeared to oppose the idea originally and succeeded in having the ASEAN foreign ministries state in December 1981 that ASEAN as a unit would not provide arms. Since then, however, Indonesia reportedly has provided clothes, fabrics, and medicines to the Sihanouk forces.

Two views have appeared in the Thai government. Arms aid reportedly is favored by the Foreign Ministry and certain parts of the army that are suspicious of the Khmer Rouge and China. Other elements of the army, however, apparently oppose direct Thai aid to the KPNLF and the Sihanoukists, arguing that it would have little military impact and could provoke Vietnam into launching a retaliatory strike against Thailand. Thai government policy currently is closer to the former view.<sup>15</sup>

ASEAN has achieved some progress in this policy. The KPNLF has developed to the point where it is able to conduct small-scale operations in the interior of Cambodia. It reportedly has gained support from segments of the population in western Cambodia, prompting Vietnamese repressive actions in 1983. The KPNLF, nevertheless, reportedly is short of weapons and other supplies. Son Sann and his commanders claim that KPNLF armed strength would increase to at least 20,000 if more weapons were available, and independent observers generally support the claim.

#### The Outlook on Cambodia

After five years of Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, there seems to be only marginal prospects in the near future for a Vietnamese withdrawal and the establishment of an independent and neutral Cambodia. The balance sheet for ASEAN strategy shows a mix of accomplishments and failures and illustrates the limits on ASEAN's ability to influence the situation. On the positive side, ASEAN unity on the issue

probably is stronger today than in 1980 and 1981 despite differences over some elements of strategy. ASEAN has constructed key building blocks to its strategy, including an international front to oppose Vietnam, a coalition government of the Khmer resistance groups, and a strengthened non-communist Khmer element. Vietnam is bogged down with a weakened economy, and the Heng Samrin administration shows minimal viability.

A continued conflict presents the danger of a major Vietnamese military strike into Thailand, but this situation may contain less danger to Thailand than Vietnamese success in consolidating its control over Cambodia. Thailand and its ASEAN partners have constructed a web of constraints on Vietnamese military action or other kinds of pressure on Thailand, including the Khmer resistance, Chinese military pressure on Vietnam's northern border, and increased U.S. security support for Thailand. This network of constraints provides Thailand with a substitute for the lost geographical buffers (Laos and Cambodia) between it and Vietnamese power. If these constraints are removed, Vietnam would gain wide latitude to determine its approach toward Thailand. Given past and present Vietnamese attitudes, Hanoi most likely would adopt a policy of confrontation and subversion.

On the minus side, Vietnam maintains military control inside Cambodia and persists in an uncompromising negotiating position, linking a settlement to acceptance of its domination. Soviet support appears unflagging despite reported differences between Hanoi and Moscow. Hanoi's defenses on its border with China reportedly are stronger than they were when China attacked in 1979. ASEAN has been limited in defining its proposals for a settlement and negotiating with Hanoi because of China's opposition to elements of the terms. Finally, the Khmer Rouge has gained strength with Chinese support; and behind the formality of the coalition Democratic Kampuchea government, the Khmer Rouge has displayed continued ideological hostility toward the non-communist groups.

It seems doubtful that ASEAN will achieve a diplomatic breakthrough in the near future. ASEAN also lacks the means to change the military or political balance inside Cambodia in the near term. That kind of change could come through stepped up Chinese military pressure on the Sino-Vietnamese border, a stronger Khmer Rouge resistance fed by a renewal of Khmer nationalism, or a reduction of Soviet military aid to Vietnam. ASEAN has no influence over the first and third of these scenarios, but it does have influence on the second.

ASEAN's strategy, therefore, has been drawn into the Chinese strategy of "bleeding" Vietnam over the long term simply because ASEAN's goals are broader than the means available to ASEAN. The organization is dependent on the other actors, especially the major powers, and they either oppose or will not give full backing to ASEAN.

The prospect of a long-term conflict will test ASEAN unity, especially with regard to Indonesia's position. The view of Vietnam from

the ruling Indonesian army is different from other elite groups within ASEAN. Army leaders have courted Vietnam, and it is common knowledge that they envisage Hanoi and Jakarta one day joining in a common front to block Chinese penetration of Southeast Asia. Indonesia periodically has shown signs of a willingness to accept a settlement based on continued Vietnamese domination over Cambodia, if it is less militarily overt than in the current situation. Army leaders appear less willing to hold out for terms that would restore Cambodia as a buffer between Thailand and Vietnam.

The odds currently are against Indonesia pushing such views within the ASEAN structure. Vietnam has not been willing to compromise to Indonesia's satisfaction, and the Indonesian government as a whole places a high value on ASEAN solidarity. Nevertheless, General Benny Murdani's trip to Vietnam in February 1984 pointed up the army's impatience, and longer term Indonesian policy is less certain.

If Vietnam should follow up its constant probing of Indonesia's position with more flexible appearing proposals, the test could develop. The passing of President Suharto from the leadership could result in new Indonesian initiatives toward Vietnam. Suharto's commitment to ASEAN solidarity has been strong, but his successors may give higher priority to a more independent and assertive foreign policy.

Within the context of a long-term situation, ASEAN's main task undoubtedly will be to take international steps to strengthen its hand with Vietnam, influence China and the United States to extend greater support, and reinforce ASEAN unity especially with respect to Indonesia.

ASEAN could step up further the supply of arms, food, clothing, and other supplies to the KPNLF and Sihanoukists. Goals would be to:

- (1) achieve non-communist military parity with the Khmer Rouge;
- (2) increase military pressure on Vietnam and thus pressure on Hanoi to negotiate, including with Sihanouk and Son Sann;
- (3) enhance the stature of the KPNLF and Sihanoukists in the eyes of the Khmer people;
- (4) offset Vietnamese efforts to bolster the Heng Samrin army through Vietnamese and Soviet training of several thousand Heng Samrin officers; and
- (5) demonstrate to the United States and other Western countries that ASEAN is set in its policy for the long haul.

ASEAN could strengthen its diplomacy with Vietnam in at least two areas. First, it could re-emphasize or re-define proposals intended to control the Khmer Rouge in a settlement. ASEAN could re-define its

proposals of a peacekeeping force by detailing the size and functions of a U.N. force or re-casting the proposal into another kind of peacekeeping force. Relatedly, Thailand could clarify that it would undertake control measures along the border with Cambodia as part of a settlement. Recent events suggest that ASEAN is considering other options for a peacekeeping force and means to control the Khmer Rouge.

Second, ASEAN could give more emphasis to issues defined by Vietnam as the "China threat" as a bargaining chip in seeking a Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia. Possible proposals could include a willingness to negotiate non-aggression pacts among the ASEAN states, the Indochina countries, and China, or a declaration of non-aggression and non-interference as a supplement to a settlement accord for Cambodia.

Such a re-adjusting of settlement proposals would address certain points Vietnam has made in criticizing ASEAN without jeopardizing basic objectives. The Vietnamese, for example, have proposed non-aggression pacts. A re-defining would bring Vietnam into an approach of compromise if Hanoi continues to use the threats of the Khmer Rouge and China as self-serving rationales for its occupation of Cambodia. However, the Vietnamese case would weaken in terms of international opinion, thus further isolating Vietnam and strengthening ASEAN, and at least some of Indonesia's desire for a more flexible diplomatic strategy would be satisfied.

Nevertheless, the incremental nature of the options open to ASEAN points up its dependence on actions by the major powers for movement on Cambodia. ASEAN can be the initiator of diplomacy and could respond to any Vietnamese flexibility, but the big powers undoubtedly will exercise considerable influence on whether or not diplomacy will be successful.

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(The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Congressional Research Service of The Library of Congress.)

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PANEL I  
Paper Two

THE GREAT POWERS AND CAMBODIA

by

**EVELYN COLBERT**

Edwin O. Reischauer Center  
School of Advanced International Studies  
The Johns Hopkins University

The three great powers most heavily involved in the Second Indochina War--the United States, the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China (PRC)--are once again involved in the Third. Each has been motivated by extra-regional considerations as well as regional ones. The United States, having accorded ASEAN central importance in its relations with Southeast Asia, has verified this centrality by its support for ASEAN's position on Cambodia. But Vietnam's alliance with the USSR and the U.S. relationship with the PRC also enter into American calculations concerning Cambodia. Chinese policy in the Cambodian conflict likewise reflects regional considerations--the number and intensity of bilateral differences between Peking and Hanoi--as well as important extra-regional considerations arising from Sino-Soviet competition and conflict. Regional factors weigh less heavily with the USSR, the concerns of which are more broadly strategic. Even so, its current relationship with Hanoi has, for the first time, provided the Soviet Union with a toehold in the region.

Each of the great powers has profited from its involvement. The United States has solidified its increasingly important relationship with ASEAN while, at the same time, helping to strengthen the regional organization. The PRC has blocked Vietnamese ambitions, contributing heavily to Hanoi's inability to consolidate its physical control over Cambodia and win international acceptance of the status quo. It enjoys also the political advantages of making common cause with the United States, the West, ASEAN, and much of the Third World in opposing a Soviet-supported venture. The Soviets, in gaining military access to Vietnamese territory, have gained logistic and intelligence collection advantages that reinforce the formidable military strength they have amassed against the United States and the PRC in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, in contributing to the military strength of their Vietnamese ally, they reinforce their own drive toward military encirclement of their Chinese adversary.

Each of the great powers has also incurred costs in connection with its Cambodian role. Support for ASEAN and for the Khmer resistance has cost China little and the United States less. Instead, for the United States and the PRC, the costs of their Cambodian roles are principally those that stem from Soviet gains, augmented in China's case

by the hostility of its militarily strong Vietnamese neighbor. For the USSR, Vietnam is a rather expensive ally, while its role as Hanoi's supporter has reduced still further Moscow's never very high standing with ASEAN.

Of the three outside powers, the PRC has the greatest capacity to influence the situation. Without substantial reduction in Sino-Vietnamese hostility, Hanoi is unlikely to agree to a settlement involving troop withdrawal and diminished control over Cambodia; without satisfaction on this score, Peking's assent to a settlement, and therefore its viability, is highly unlikely. The Soviet Union, for its part, could make it much more difficult for Hanoi to persist by substantially reducing its assistance, its economic assistance particularly. However, it is hard to see circumstances that would induce Moscow to assume the risk to Soviet military access that such a course would involve. American leverage is especially limited. There is little practical prospect that the United States could offer Hanoi material inducements of sufficient magnitude to tempt it to abandon its Cambodian ambitions or its alliance with the USSR. Nor does the United States have the leverage in Peking or Hanoi that might enable it to promote the rapprochement between them without which prospects for a Cambodian settlement remain remote.

#### The Role of the United States

The Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, in December 1978, eliminated for the duration all prospects of Washington-Hanoi normalization; contacts with Hanoi since then have been largely limited to refugee and missing-in-action matters. Well before the invasion, however, the Carter administration, having come into office committed to normalization, found its path blocked by Vietnamese insistence on a prior agreement to pay reparations. By autumn 1978, when Hanoi abandoned this demand, more complications were beginning to arise: increasing animosity between Vietnam and the PRC (with which the American normalization process was now moving very rapidly); the strengthening of Hanoi-Moscow ties, evidenced in Hanoi's admission to COMECOM and the Hanoi/Moscow peace and friendship treaty; the impact on public opinion of Vietnam's treatment of the Hoa, its Overseas Chinese community, and the beginnings of the "boat people" exodus; indications, political and military, that Hanoi was preparing for action against Cambodia on a much larger scale than in 1976 and 1977; and the reluctance of the Carter administration, already in trouble over more important foreign policy objectives, to act on normalization before the mid-term election. By this time also, normalization had ceased to be the principal, perhaps only, administration objectives in Southeast Asia that it had seemed to be in 1976; instead, in 1977, support for ASEAN had been accorded first place in U.S. Southeast Asian policy.

Although the United States had not taken sides on the sometimes quite extensive Vietnamese-Cambodian border hostilities of the preceding years, the December 1978 invasion changed the context of American national interest in which Cambodia was viewed. Vietnam's rapid advance

in force to the Thai border, its establishment of a puppet government in Phnom Penh, and its clear intention of maintaining its military occupation of Cambodia for the indefinite future constituted a clear challenge to principles of respect for national sovereignty as well as a potential threat to Thailand and to ASEAN. Soviet support for Vietnam and Chinese support for Cambodia brought the conflict into the sphere of American global policy.

Impelled by these interests, since 1978 the United States has joined in pressures for a political settlement that would include the restoration of Cambodia's independence and the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces. However it has not taken the lead in international efforts to bring this about, exercising such leadership only in the international refugee and relief effort. Instead, it has faithfully followed ASEAN's lead, supporting its international political campaign and bringing American influence to bear in mobilizing international economic pressures on Vietnam. It has reiterated its security commitment to Thailand, expedited arms shipments to that country during periods of heavy Vietnamese border pressures, and modestly increased military assistance to the other ASEAN states. But it has neither played a direct military role in the conflict nor provided military assistance to Khmer resistance forces.

U.S. support for ASEAN serves substantial American interests. ASEAN--far and away the most successful regional association in the Third World--has become a major factor for East Asian peace and stability and an influential voice in the North-South debate. Its cohesion and strength have reduced to insignificance the explosive potential of disputes among its members into which the United States might be drawn, and it plays an autonomous and constructive role in regional problems of concern to the United States. ASEAN today is America's fifth largest trading partner. Three of its members command the straits connecting the Pacific and Indian oceans; the Philippines is host to strategically vital U.S. air and naval bases; and other ASEAN members have been generous in providing landing rights for U.S. aircraft performing reconnaissance and logistic functions.

American policy on Cambodia has also served ASEAN interests. It is generally consistent with ASEAN desires to maintain the primacy of regional interests in a regional problem and to limit to the extent possible the further injection of global conflict into Southeast Asia. It has been an important factor in helping ASEAN mobilize international support for continued pressures on Vietnam.

To be sure, because the United States is not playing a major part in the hostilities, it has little leverage. Its policy can be criticized as inconsistent; it provides some political and humanitarian support to the non-communist elements of the Khmer coalition but refuses to provide the military support that would strengthen their ability to compete with the Khmer Rouge and increase the pressures on Hanoi. Helping to maintain the stalemate helps also to maintain the threat that hostilities will spread to Thailand and confront the United States with the need to

implement its security commitment under the Manila Pact. Finally, it can be argued, unswerving American support for ASEAN, while not on a scale likely to influence Hanoi, discourages ASEAN from looking more realistically at prospects for Vietnamese compliance and from seeking the accommodation with Hanoi necessary to long-term peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

### The Role of China

Tensions between Peking and Hanoi, earlier largely subordinated to the interests of Vietnamese reunification, began to build up rather rapidly after the fall of Saigon. To be sure, Peking had responded enthusiastically to Hanoi's victory. Its establishment of diplomatic relations with Thailand in July, while Hanoi was still trying to maximize pressures on Bangkok to eliminate the American presence, was not on the same level of betrayal as the Shanghai Communique. However, it hardly seemed the action of a loyal and helpful friend. Hanoi's failings as an ally were then in turn demonstrated to Peking by Le Duan's refusal to sign off on an anti-hegemony statement during his September 1975 visit to China and by what seemed to be the Vietnamese view that China was obligated to provide even more economic assistance for post-war reconstruction than it had extended during the war.

To these irritants on both sides were added more long-standing grievances. Disputes over the common land border, set aside during long years of Indochina war, had become the subject of renewed negotiation in 1974. These, however, had produced little beyond an exchange in which each side accused the other of moving border markers and establishing illegal settlements. Even more bitterness came to characterize exchanges over disputed islands in the South China Sea: the Paracels (seized by China from South Vietnam in January 1974) and the Spratlys (where North Vietnam had seized South-Vietnamese-occupied islands in February 1975). Vietnam's overseas Chinese community had also become a source of friction. Even before the end of the war, Hanoi had become suspicious of PRC connections with Hoa living in the northern border area. Then, early in 1976 the PRC became irritated and concerned over Hanoi's pressures on Hoa residents in the south to retain the Vietnamese citizenship forced upon them in the Diem era. The situation was exacerbated in 1977 and early 1978 when, even before the massive Hoa exodus from the south, Hoa in northern Vietnam began to flee overland to China to escape the pogroms that seemed threatened both by Hanoi's domestic policies and its intensifying disputes with China. Negotiations over how to cope with this large refugee flow, even more difficult and inconclusive than those on the border issue, embittered most of 1978, a period during which frictions over Cambodia were also escalating.

The developing conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia in fact posed difficult choices for China. On the one hand, while Pol Pot was pursuing domestic policies far from according with Chinese views and making Cambodia an international pariah, the foreign policy of the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) was eminently satisfactory. Deep and basic

hostility toward the USSR, rooted in Moscow's failure to withdraw its representatives from Phnom Penh when Lon Nol displaced Sihanouk, made it easy for the DK to join the PRC in denouncing hegemonism and other aspects of Soviet policy and to position itself as a loyal and deserving ally. Hanoi, on the other hand, was already too close to the USSR, was quarreling with China on other matters, and was perhaps too ambitious to be a comfortable neighbor. But the possibility that the PRC could continue to compete with Moscow for Hanoi's affections was not yet foreclosed. Moreover, Vietnam's formidable military power, its common border with China now extended by its control over Laos, and its prestige in the Third World and elsewhere were all weighty arguments against policies that would drive it wholly into Moscow's arms. Unqualified Chinese support of Cambodia, coupled with other current Sino-Vietnamese disputes, could only serve to bring about this very development. At the same time, given the extent of present and political difficulties with Hanoi, acquiescence in the establishment of Vietnamese control over Cambodia would not serve China's interests, which in fact lay in averting circumstances that would force a clear choice.

Thus, until 1978, China tried hard to temporize. It continued to sign aid agreements with Vietnam (and Laos) until as late as January 1978. To balance Soviet influence, it encouraged the United States to normalize relations with Hanoi and ASEAN to seek friendly ties. While supplying arms to Cambodia, it also made clear its preference for a negotiated solution, and it refused to join the DK in condemning Vietnamese aggression.

By the beginning of 1978, the balancing act had become markedly more difficult. Escalating hostilities had led the DK to suspend relations with Hanoi in December 1977. In the months thereafter Chinese military assistance increased and took new forms, signalling more clearly the PRC's commitment to Cambodian defense. Meanwhile, controversy over the Hoa--especially over the refugee flight--was also escalating to the point where, in mid-May, the PRC announced its intentions to divert project aid intended for Vietnam to programs for assisting Hoa refugees in China. Growing enmity was also reflected in the propaganda of both sides. Hanoi began to attribute Khmer aggressiveness to Chinese prompting and support; Chinese officials began to describe Vietnam as the Asian Cuba and the Hong Kong communist press to warn of the imminent establishment of a Soviet naval base in Vietnam.

The final break came in June when, in response to Hanoi's announcement that it had joined the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), Peking terminated all remaining aid. Thereafter, levels of Chinese-Vietnamese acrimony rose higher still as did levels of Chinese military assistance to Cambodia. Both countries began to build up their forces on the Sino-Vietnamese border as armed incidents multiplied there. China began to warn that while it would not intervene in Cambodia should Vietnam invade, it might well retaliate elsewhere, a threat it fulfilled in February 1979 when the People's Liberation Army (PLA) crossed the border into northern Vietnam and the erstwhile allies

found themselves at last at war. China's brief invasion of Vietnam had mixed results. It inflicted serious damage on northern Vietnam, but the Chinese also suffered heavy casualties, while problems encountered during the operation apparently gave rise to a certain amount of internal controversy over its wisdom. In addition, while the invasion demonstrated to Hanoi that Peking's threats were far from empty, it failed to bring about a diversion from its Cambodian course.

Although China continues to hold the threat of a second "lesson" over Vietnam's head, particularly in the context of possible Vietnamese action against Thailand, since 1979 hostilities between the two have been confined to sporadic clashes and exchanges of artillery fire along the border. Chinese military activities reached their highest point since 1979 in the spring of 1984 when they were accompanied also by unusual Chinese naval activity in the South China Sea. On the whole, both sides have tended to exaggerate the extent of the hostilities. However through the threat they pose, the Chinese have succeeded in tying down a substantial Vietnamese force on their common border, while Chinese military assistance to the Khmer resistance forces is a major factor in their continued ability to harass Vietnamese forces and undermine the credibility of the Heng Samrin regime.

Peking's Cambodian role has brought it into closer and more cordial relations with the ASEAN countries than it has ever enjoyed in the past. Nevertheless ASEAN attitudes toward the partnership with China on the Cambodian issue are distinctly ambiguous.

China's provision of military supplies to the anti-Vietnamese resistance is welcomed as increasing the pressures that ASEAN hopes will eventually bring Hanoi to the negotiating table. At the same time, the fact that most of China's support goes to Pol Pot's forces heightens concern over the disproportionate strength of the Khmer communists vis-a-vis the ASEAN supported non-communist resistance elements. ASEAN recognizes also that PRC assurances of a Chinese response should Vietnam attack Thailand are probably more credible in Hanoi than U.S. reiterations of its Manila Pact commitment. Nevertheless, the de facto alliance that has developed between Thailand and the PRC worries Thailand's ASEAN partners, especially Indonesia, as giving Peking opportunities for developing potentially dangerous leverage in Bangkok. ASEAN also welcomes Chinese support in the United Nations and its willingness to lobby in the Third World for ASEAN's position. But it sees China's goal of "bleeding Vietnam white" regardless of the length of time this may take as antithetical to its own desire for a compromise political solution that, while removing the Vietnamese military presence from Thailand's borders, would also take Hanoi's security interests into account. It fears that, despite China's protestations to the contrary, its real goal in Cambodia is the establishment of a government in Phnom Penh under its own sway, an alternative that ASEAN finds no more acceptable than Heng Samrin's subservience to Hanoi. And recalling its clash with China at the 1981 U.N. Conference on Cambodia over resolution terms China resisted as unfavorable to the DK, it fears some future confrontation with China over peace terms.



Peking is in a much stronger position to influence the course of events in Cambodia than the United States. DK resistance would certainly be even less effective without Chinese support and arguments for international acceptance of the Heng Samrin regime would become more plausible. Most importantly, whatever arrangements others may be prepared to make, no compromise settlement in Cambodia can be envisaged without Peking's assent. This seems unlikely any time soon.

Rather, the PRC appears prepared to accept indefinitely the consequences of its break with Hanoi: the hostile presence on its border of a large military force armed by the Russians with weapons superior to its own; the elimination of opportunities to exert influence in Laos through other than military pressures; and a close Soviet-Vietnamese alliance. It probably has some confidence that however expensive and unsatisfactory the Chinese first "lesson" proved to be, Hanoi will not lightly risk a second. With its emotions over Vietnamese ingratitude and perfidy intense, Peking has rigidly rejected the notion that a more accommodating policy toward Hanoi might be more effective than a punitive one in breaking a Hanoi-Moscow tie that is based, in part, on a strong mutual interest in containing China.

#### The Role of the USSR

Moscow's opportunities to gain first place in the competition with the PRC for influence over Vietnam began to open up well before heightened Vietnamese-Chinese antagonisms gave the USSR the crucial advantage. Massive American intervention in the Indochina war created Vietnamese requirements for military assistance that only the USSR could provide. Beginning in 1965, the Soviets began to outdistance China as Vietnam's principal supporter; by 1975, Soviet aid was three times greater than Chinese. After the end of the war, as Hanoi turned its attention to economic reconstruction, it looked primarily to its allies for the necessary support which the USSR proved more able and willing to supply than the PRC. While, like the Soviet Union, China initially responded to Vietnamese needs, its aid ran at only an estimated \$350 million a year until its complete termination in mid-1978. The USSR, by contrast, in its first post-war aid agreement in October 1975, committed itself to funding 60 percent of Hanoi's 1976-1980 Five Year Economic Plan at an ultimate estimated expense of some \$2.1 billion.

Moscow's opportunities increased significantly as Hanoi's policies toward its ethnic Chinese community and toward Pol Pot's Cambodia and the Chinese response brought relations between the two former Asian allies to the point of complete rupture. As Vietnam's relations with China worsened and it began its preparations for the military occupation of Cambodia, the Soviet-Vietnamese tie grew stronger. In July 1978, Vietnam joined COMECOM; in August and September it received massive quantities of Soviet arms; on November 3, Hanoi and Moscow signed a peace and friendship treaty which committed the two parties in case of an attack or threat against either to "consult with each other with a view to eliminating the threat" and to "take appropriate and effective measures

to safeguard peace and the security of the two countries." When, however, the PRC invaded Vietnam in February 1979, the USSR responded with notable caution. It provided additional military assistance but, in statements supporting Vietnam and condemning China, it did not commit itself to any particular course of action nor did it stage large-scale manoeuvres on the Sino-Soviet border until after the Chinese announced their plans for withdrawal.

Since 1979 the relationship between Moscow and Hanoi has developed in ways that serve important purposes for each. Soviet assistance has contributed heavily to Vietnam's ability to sustain the costs of invading and occupying Cambodia and to sustain an economy largely isolated from trade and aid outside the Soviet bloc. The USSR provides Hanoi with an additional deterrent to PRC action against it, as well as with intelligence support and weapons--missiles, advanced aircraft, and naval vessels--that have significantly enhanced its own already formidable defense capabilities against China. In return, the Soviets have gained an ally on China's border and have been able to make increasing use of Vietnamese territory for their own military purposes.

Although the USSR has apparently not been as generous with its aid and terms as Vietnam would like, the USSR and the East Europeans have become virtually the only outside sources of support for the backward, inefficient, and war-burdened Vietnamese economy. Soviet aid figures are not officially released and can only be estimated on the basis of trade and other figures. Since 1978 Soviet economic aid has been estimated at \$1 billion a year. In 1981, according to an official Vietnamese report, Soviet aid provided 90 percent of Vietnam's food imports, nearly 70 percent of its fertilizer, nearly 90 percent of its cotton, and 80 percent of its metals. With most Soviet aid taking the form of soft loans or concessional prices rather than grants, Vietnam, having little to export in turn, is now heavily in debt to the USSR.

In addition to providing or financing Vietnamese imports of a wide variety of essential commodities, the USSR and the East European countries have funded and provided technicians for electric power plants, irrigation systems, highway and railway maintenance, and industrial plants of various kinds. Agreements for joint offshore oil exploitation were signed in 1980 and 1981 but, thus far, little seems to have been done to carry them out. Also in 1981 Vietnam and the USSR signed agreements inter alia committing the USSR to help build forty new projects (mostly energy and transportation related), and to continue its assistance on sixty others, while committing Vietnam to increase its exports of food and raw materials to the USSR.

The USSR also provides considerable economic assistance to Laos, where perhaps more than 1,000 Russian technicians are stationed, and some economic assistance to Cambodia. Aid to Laos is provided directly; however, in 1982, Vietnam, Laos, and the USSR agreed to a tripartite accord on principles governing economic and trade cooperation. Soviet aid to Cambodia for the most part is provided through Vietnam.

Soviet military assistance is also substantial; total costs in the period 1979-1983 have been estimated at about \$2.5 billion. Soviet advisors provide technical assistance to the Vietnamese forces and Soviet aircraft ferry men and arms within Vietnam and from Vietnam to Cambodia and Laos. The Soviets provide Vietnam with armored vehicles, artillery pieces, anti-aircraft guns, surface-to-air missile launchers, late-model MIG-21 interceptors, ground attack fighters, cargo, assault, and ASW helicopters, patrol boats (some missile armed), tank-landing ships, and mine sweepers. The USSR has also provided Vietnam with radar and other monitoring facilities.

The Soviets also supply military assistance to Cambodia and in greater amounts to Laos where about 500 military advisors are stationed. There is a very small Soviet military presence in Cambodia and assistance is being provided to improve facilities at Kompong Som. Although Soviet naval and merchant vessels visit this port where Soviet cargo handlers are stationed, reports, mostly from Thai sources, that the Soviets are independently constructing a naval base at Kompong Som seem to be without foundation.

Moscow's use and development of Vietnamese facilities for its own purposes has grown to the point where Hanoi's contention that it has not permitted Soviet bases on Vietnamese soil, although perhaps technically correct, constitutes a distinction without a difference. According to Western intelligence sources cited in the press, some 15 Soviet naval vessels now routinely use Cam Ranh Bay, with as many as 30 present on occasion. Soviet construction activity has been limited and visiting Soviet vessels still depend on moored support vessels for maintenance, repair, and refueling. However, the Soviets have made some additions to the facilities left behind by the United States including a pier, shelters for nuclear submarines, underground fuel storage tanks, and navigation aids, as well as an electronic monitoring station. Four Bears (heavy bombers) are also routinely stationed at Cam Ranh Bay while a floating drydock has reportedly been moored in the river at Ho Chi Minhville. In the spring of 1984, Soviet forces staged their first amphibious landing exercise on the Vietnamese coast—a small-scale operation reportedly involving about 500 naval infantry from the Soviet amphibious assault ship Ivan Rogov and eight warships including the aircraft carrier Kiev.

Soviet military access to Vietnam provides the USSR with strategic advantages sufficiently great to outweigh the rather substantial costs involved in supporting Vietnam's economy, helping to sustain its military occupation of Cambodia, and strengthening its defense against China. The latter indeed cannot really be counted as a cost since the strong force Vietnam deploys on China's border is also a contribution to Moscow's military encirclement of the PRC. Moscow has gained other advantages against the PRC as well: strengthened air and intelligence capabilities against Chinese targets and considerably enhanced ability to maintain a continuous naval presence in the South China Sea. The USSR's competitive standing against the United States in the Western Pacific—a

standing already much enhanced in the last decade and more by the marked growth in numbers and capabilities of the Soviet Pacific Fleet and the assignment of the Backfire bomber and the SS-20 theatre nuclear missile to the Soviet Far East--has also been strengthened by the ability to deploy from Vietnamese territory which has extended the range of Soviet aerial reconnaissance to the southern coast of Australia and brought U.S. installations in the Philippines within the direct range of Soviet military aircraft and naval vessels. Access to Vietnamese territory also contributes to the Soviet quest for global military status, enabling ships of the Soviet Pacific fleet to reach the Indian Ocean in half the time required for passage from Vladivostok and compensating somewhat for the maritime disadvantages the Russians suffer from the lengthy icing-over of their own Pacific ports and the necessity for Soviet vessels to pass through a number of choke points to reach the open Pacific from home waters.

No such relationship could be friction-free. Journalists and other observers have reported Soviet irritation with Vietnamese inefficiency and demands for a larger management role in Russian-supported economic projects. Conversely, the Vietnamese have been described as resenting limits on Soviet aid, the large and growing Soviet role in the Vietnamese economy, and the overbearing Russian behavior; Caucasian visitors have reported more cordial treatment from Vietnamese they encounter once it is understood that they are not Russians. Friction has also been reported over alleged Soviet efforts to build up independent positions of influence in Laos and Cambodia. Having had occasion in the past to accuse Moscow (and Peking) of betraying Vietnamese interests, Hanoi reacted with understandable alarm to the resumption of Sino-Soviet talks in 1982. It appeared fairly quickly thereafter, however, that reassurances provided in Soviet-Vietnamese meetings were adequate to their purposes. Certainly, there are no signs that the Sino-Soviet dialogue is making any progress on Cambodia. Publicly, at least, the Soviets continue to echo the Vietnamese position that the situation there is irreversible.

In contrast to the close Soviet-Vietnamese relationship, and partly because of it, Soviet relations with the ASEAN countries are very cool. The Soviet alliance with Vietnam has served only to intensify ASEAN support for a continued U.S. military presence in the region. This may not impress Moscow as a very heavy cost, however, since the ASEAN region has never been among its high priority targets. Nor has it been one in which Moscow has ever exerted significant influence, either over governments or over Communist parties, even when it was supplying large amounts of aid to Sukarno's Indonesia.

#### Conclusion

In sum, each of the great powers is paying a price for the policies it is now pursuing with respect to the conflict in Cambodia. But, rightly or wrongly, none of the three finds the price greater than the rewards justify. Prospects for change in their policies are, therefore, remote.

**PANEL I**  
**Paper Three**

**JAPANESE INFLUENCE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA**

by

**NATHANIEL THAYER**  
School of Advanced International Studies  
The Johns Hopkins University

I would like to talk to you today about the four concepts prevalent in Japanese foreign policy. In the first place, the Japanese see Southeast Asia as their backyard, and they feel that if they do not succeed in maintaining good relations there, they will not succeed anywhere. In this respect they give an importance to this area that the United States sometimes does not.

Secondly, the Japanese see their economic strength as their most important diplomatic tool. Thirdly, they feel that their old alliances throughout the region dating back to World War II still hold sway, but these alliances do not dominate their thinking. Fourthly, they say they have only one ally and that ally is the United States. The United States provides a framework for developing Japan's own foreign policy. Whether the U.S. positions are right or wrong, the Japanese will follow them, though there is always vigorous debate. In the past, prime ministers have generally followed the guidance of the foreign ministry in foreign affairs. Now that is reversed. Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, not the foreign ministry, is the voice for foreign policy.

Now let me go back to the beginning and explain each point.

Every year, the Japanese foreign ministry publishes an in-house paper on economic presence in Southeast Asia. This is a country-by-country analysis of major economic influences in and on the region. Throughout the Southeast Asian countries, it has concluded that Japan has the strongest presence. The only exceptions are Hong Kong and Taiwan where there is a higher degree of U.S. investment. The Japanese do not take this as a matter of pride, but, as a strength to be used in the development of their foreign policy. They see economics as the principle tool to be used in the pursuit of their policies in Southeast Asia. The Japanese believe that the United States is important to Southeast Asia. But its role is essentially passive. It furnishes a market for Southeast Asian goods. The Japanese, however, have a double-edged sword--rather, the two swords of the Samurai. First, they purchase resources from Southeast Asia. Then they add value to those resources and turn them into merchandise and resell them to Southeast Asia.

Other important alliances of the Japanese go back to World War II. They feel very close to Indonesia and, strangely enough, to Burma. Japan has taken special pride, rightly or wrongly, for bringing Indonesia

into independence. Its closeness to Burma may be because it was one of the scenes of the great battles of the war. On the other hand, Japan does not empathize readily with the Philippines--a nation not close to the Japanese because of its alliance with the United States in World War II--though the Japanese do enjoy strong economic presence with the Philippines.

Several years ago, a polling organization took a survey of Japanese citizens to understand what they thought of various ideologies--liberalism, authoritarianism, communism, totalitarianism, democracy. Some of the responses could have been anticipated. The majority answered that they did not like communism very much. One answer stood out, however, since it was repeated over and over again. This response was that ideology, though it offered timeless and universal principles, was relative. Even, when asked whether democracy was good or bad, most Japanese responded, "It depends on time and circumstances."

This concept of ideology derives from Japan's own history. Ideology was used as a tool for development--and development was important. Why was development important? Because development was necessary to a strong nation-state. If the Japanese embrace any ideology, it is nationalism. You can see that in their view toward Southeast Asia or toward other parts of the world; they understand that as a nation develops, its ideology develops and changes, too.

This fact should be remembered when Japanese approaches to China and Vietnam are considered. For many years, I could never understand why even the most conservative Japanese businessmen were urging closer ties between the United States and Mao Tse-tung's China. It later became clear to me that the Japanese believed the force of communism would fade with China's development. Development was the important consideration--communism was not.

There may be some truth to this belief. I do not know. Nevertheless, the Japanese, seeing what is happening today, will support the thesis that ideology is not the most important factor.

To provide substantiation for this thesis, I offer the importance the Japanese have placed on having Vietnam interact with the other countries of Southeast Asia. This plan has not been well received by any other nation. Nonetheless, the prime minister and the foreign ministry advocate the nurturing of Vietnam. The fact that Vietnam is communist is of little concern. The Japanese are today prepared to start supplying aid to Vietnam as soon as the other countries of the region are agreeable. They believe that the longer a situation of conflict continues, the farther Vietnam falls behind the ASEAN nations. The Japanese do not want the gap between Vietnam and the rest of the world to become so large that closure would be impossible.

Finally, let me speak about Nakasone--the new fellow on the block. He has emerged as a force unto himself. He is the superstructure.

Nakasone won his first election in 1946 and has been in the Japanese political arena ever since. His major concern is foreign policy even though in his 30 years in the political arena he has never served as foreign minister. Due to the fact that he makes his own policies and goes his own way, friction existed between him and the foreign ministry prior to his election as prime minister. Now that he is "running the show," the ministry does what he says--not the other way around.

Nakasone places great emphasis on Southeast Asia. Unlike some officials in the foreign ministry, Nakasone does not put the People's Republic of China on a pedestal or allow it to over-shadow Japan's other interests. He was attracted to Mao's China because he saw in Mao a nationalist using nationalism to forge a strong nation. He liked Chou En-lai even better since Chou married nationalism to a successful diplomacy. But Nakasone has been cautious in his interaction with China. At one time, he called Japanese involvement on the mainland an anachronistic hunger for conventional greatness.

The prime minister is not problem oriented. You will notice that Japan and the United States have one major characteristic in common. Both nations jump into action only after a problem has occurred. They work on solving the problem, and when it has been solved they retire and wait for the next emergency. Nakasone would rather let the foreign ministry handle all such matters, within his guidelines, of course. He is interested in concepts and ideas within concepts. The concepts he emphasizes when he is dealing with Southeast Asia are peace in Asia and prosperity in Asia. Vietnam is the problem there.

Each Japanese prime minister has tried to broaden the scope of relationships with ASEAN.

Early postwar prime ministers believed that the economic relationship with the ASEAN countries was sufficient and so long as Japan was seen as contributing to the various countries' welfare, Japan would be held in esteem. Later prime ministers came to realize that economic ties were not enough, that a cultural element was also needed. They began to talk of person-to-person relationships. In practical terms, they brought ASEAN students to Japan to study. Left to Nakasone is the task of adding a security dimension to the relationship. So far, he has stressed the limited nature of the Japanese military build-up. Some Southeast Asians reject his contention that Japan poses no threat. They point out that what attracted the Japanese into Southeast Asia--a stable supply of raw materials--should still attract them since Japan has an appetite to make more voraciously a growing economy. Other Southeast Asians believe that the Japanese military presence poses no threat so long as the Japanese are allied to the United States which will not tolerate any Japanese adventurism in Southeast Asia. Recognizing that Japan has the ability to influence American policy, still other Southeast Asians believe that the Japanese interest in Southeast Asia may dampen large swings in the U.S. interest in Southeast Asia and that larger Japanese military forces heighten American receptivity to Japanese persuasion.

**PANEL I**

**COMMENTS ON PAPERS PRESENTED  
ON  
CAMBODIA AND WORLD INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

by

**MICHAEL DENT EILAND**  
Defense Intelligence Agency

My comments here reflect only my personal opinions and are not necessarily those of the U.S. Government. In fact, I suspect that the U.S. Government would hotly repudiate my opinions!

I am not confident of my ability to serve as provocateur at this session, since I find little with which to disagree in the papers of Evelyn Colbert and Larry Niksch, either as to fact or analysis. There is one major exception, however. External political activity has meaning only in relation to the internal situation in Cambodia. My sense is that events inside the country are moving faster than is accounted for by diplomatic activity, or in either of the papers under discussion here.

My concerns in this regard can be summed up in the shorthand rhetorical question, "Whose side is time on?" I feel that the assumption of continuing stalemate in Cambodia, which is central to both papers, is susceptible to challenge. I believe that there is lack of appreciation of the changes in Cambodia, especially those over the past year, that add up to creeping consolidation of Vietnamese authority there. I would like to mention three examples in particular.

First, at this time last year, there was some optimism at the success of anti-Vietnamese military resistance activity in the interior (albeit optimism tempered by uneasiness that the Khmer Rouge forces were responsible for most of the success). Early this year, however, the Vietnamese embarked on a three-phased campaign that shifted the center of gravity of military activity back to the Thai border area. The first phase was an ironically classic "search-and-destroy" operation at the tip of the Great Lake, featuring armed helicopters and pallet bombing. The second phase was a series of attacks on the resistance-cum-refugee camps along the border. These attacks, among other effects, greatly disrupted the logistical activities of all resistance factions. They sent up to 90,000 Khmer civilians at one time fleeing to temporary evacuation sites on Thai soil.

These first two phases of the Vietnamese campaign were not necessarily unexpected. But the third phase was to keep pressure on the border encampments throughout the rainy season, in contrast to the pattern of drawback from the border in previous years. The result has been a noticeable decrease in the number of resistance-initiated incidents



in the interior. To be sure, the Vietnamese showed tactical ineptness and lack of energy on many occasions, while the resistance, especially the KPNLF, often showed unexpected skill and courage. However, the strategic effect of the Vietnamese campaign was to shift the focus of military activity to the border, and, so far, to keep it there. From the Vietnamese point of view, the security situation, while not good, is better than it has been in a couple of years.

A second example of secular change has been the increasing use of troops of the Heng Samrin regime. While they are still noticeably unenthusiastic about their work, they have substituted for or complemented the Vietnamese in many operations. The return of hundreds of cadre from training in Vietnam and the Soviet Union will probably strengthen the Heng Samrin military capabilities. Although these capabilities will still be marginal, all of this raises the specter to non-communist resistance leaders of a "Khmerization" (their word, not mine) of the war, in which focus on the Vietnamese as the problem is blurred.

The third and perhaps most ominous example, although I don't believe it was alluded to in either paper, is that of Vietnamese settling of civilians--some call it colonization--of many many parts of Cambodia. Some districts of Phnom Penh now have a majority of Vietnamese residents. Towns and villages along major waterways, such as the ferry crossing at Neak Luong, and many areas along the shores of the Great Lake are heavily Vietnamese. These are not merely returning former residents of Cambodia. There is clearly a policy of supporting Vietnamese newcomers to Cambodia. Whether it is Hanoi's policy to move people from Vietnam to Cambodia or whether the settlement is spontaneous migration following historical patterns, the results are the same: a large and vigorous group of people from a country with one of the highest population growth rates in Asia is moving into a relatively underpopulated but fertile country. Some crowding out of ethnic Cambodian merchants and fishermen has already been observed. On another level, the presence of these Vietnamese settlers provides one more excuse for the Vietnamese army to remain in Cambodia. This would be completely in accord with historical precedent.

What is the effect of these changes? I suggest that if they were fully appreciated there would be a greater sense of urgency to settle the problem and less willingness to merely apply patient pressure on Hanoi. While such pressure has been applied over the past few years, the Vietnamese have been consolidating in Cambodia. Signs that they might be prepared to negotiate have either been transparently spurious, such as those that surface each year around the time of the U.N. General Assembly, or have just not panned out. The rude response of Nguyen Co Thach to President Suharto's initiatives early this year is one example. The lack of meaningful response to the brilliant ASEAN formula for national reconciliation is another. (By the way, this formula, which is really at the core of the ASEAN position, is not given sufficient attention in either paper.) It seems apparent that the Vietnamese are just not

interested in negotiating. And why should they be? There is little incentive for them to do so. Despite the confident reliance on a policy of "keeping the pressure on," the costs to the Vietnamese are just not high enough to compel them to alter their course in Cambodia.

So why doesn't ASEAN make the costs higher? A common rejoinder by Western countries to requests for military-related assistance to the non-communist resistance is that ASEAN could easily foot the bill itself. But the problem is not one of resources. It is that the risks to ASEAN of attempting to inflict the necessary costs on the Vietnamese to get them to make compromises on Cambodia are too great--the proximate risk obviously being Vietnamese action, overt or otherwise, against Thailand. A strong security guarantee from an extra-regional power is what the ASEAN states, especially Thailand, want: a guarantee that the ASEAN states will not be left in an exposed position, vis-a-vis Vietnam, if they strengthen the noncommunist resistance to the point that it can inflict the necessary costs on the Vietnamese and be a credible counterweight to the Khmer Rouge. My sense is that this kind of security guarantee is only adequately demonstrated by active participation in and commitment to the resistance cause, as opposed to verbal assurances, generalized political and humanitarian support, expedited shipment of military equipment already on order, etc.

Only two extra-regional powers--China and the United States--are capable of providing such a guarantee. ASEAN is fully comfortable with only one of those two.

The situation in which those who oppose the Vietnamese domination of Cambodia find themselves is described by guerrilla warfare jargoniers (e.g., Khmer Rouge) as the "strategic defensive." But, as my Army colleague Colonel Harry Summers has pointed out, reliance on the strategic defensive only makes sense "when time is on your side." Otherwise, the only chance for success is to take the risks of striking hard with what power you have while you still have it.

I have been suggesting that the Vietnamese have been gradually consolidating their hold on Cambodia in the last year, without effective counter from those of us who oppose their presence there. So my major problem with the two otherwise brilliant papers delivered here this morning is that they are presented in a framework that is too static. If we fail to account for the disturbing trends and fail to face up to the necessity for force, decisively applied to achieve an environment in which the Vietnamese feel the costs of their venture sufficiently to want to talk seriously about compromise, then discussions of interrelationships of great powers and of ASEAN will soon become hypothesizing about West Vietnam, which we used to call Cambodia.

**PANEL II**

**LEADERSHIP, LEGITIMACY, AND SUCCESSION  
IN  
SOUTHEAST ASIA**

**Moderator: Donald E. Weatherbee**

**PANEL II**  
**Paper One**

**LEADERSHIP, LEGITIMACY, AND SUCCESSION:  
THE CASE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

by

**BENJAMIN N. MUEGO**  
Bowling Green State University

On October 24, 1984, shortly after the release of both majority and minority versions of the Agrava Commission Report<sup>1</sup> on the assassination of opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., President Ferdinand E. Marcos went into seclusion. His absence from the public eye, albeit only for an abbreviated period of time, triggered rumors such as: (1) that he was gravely ill, (2) that he had undergone critical surgery, (3) that he was undergoing medical treatment for some chronic ailment, and (4) that, plain and simple, he was dead. The flurry of speculations about Ferdinand E. Marcos's state of health once again raised the issue of succession, one of the most talked about topics in Philippine politics since Marcos assumed plenary executive and legislative powers on September 21, 1972.

Had the speculations about Ferdinand E. Marcos's incapacitation or untimely demise proved to be true, the stage would have been set for a likely power struggle involving a number of possible successors and their supporters, each jockeying for the most advantageous position from which to contest the presidency after the official mourning period was over. Under a constitutional amendment approved by the Filipino people in a national referendum on January 27, 1984, the speaker, currently Nicanor Yniguez, Sr., of Leyte del Sur, of the Batasang Pambansa (the National Assembly) will serve as acting president in a caretaker role until a successor is chosen and qualified in a special election to be called for the purpose. Significantly enough, the speaker is forbidden by the amendment to seek the presidency himself. The amendment also restored the office of vice-president and established a line of succession uncannily similar to that which obtained during the lifetime of the Second Philippine Republic.

While the next vice-president will not be chosen until the next presidential election in 1987, the intent of the amendment is quite clear, i.e., to clarify the presidential succession process.<sup>2</sup> Earlier, a scenario such as the one outlined above would have given the responsibility of selecting a successor to Ferdinand E. Marcos to the executive committee, a fifteen-person body consisting of representatives from different constituencies and sectors such as business, the youth, the nation's governors, etc.<sup>3</sup> It was precisely because of serious doubts that such a plural body might not be able to function effectively in the aftermath of the death or total incapacitation of the incumbent president, especially

since three of the committee members were themselves known contenders for the presidency, that the Batasang Pambansa proceeded to abolish the committee and streamline the succession process. During the Batasan debate on the proposed constitutional amendment, it became apparent that a number of assemblymen, some from the ruling Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) itself, expressed reservations at the possibility that President Marcos might designate his own wife, Imelda Romualdez-Marcos, as his successor.

The assassination of opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., on August 21, 1983, and lingering public doubt about the role the first family may have played in the crime, plus the resounding defeat of KBL candidates in Metro Manila in the parliamentary election of May 14, 1984,<sup>4</sup> has somewhat tarnished Imelda Romualdez-Marcos's image as a serious contender for the presidency on her own. It may be argued, therefore, that by spearheading the fight to restore the office of vice-president and conversely, the abolition of the executive committee, such KBL stalwarts as Arturo M. Tolentino were, in effect, distancing themselves from Imelda Romualdez-Marcos in Metro Manila as well as staking out a possible middle ground in the event of the total collapse of the Marcos regime.

#### Contenders From The Ruling Party

There are at least five known contenders from among the ruling KBL who are regarded by knowledgeable observers as having a reasonably good chance of winning the presidency on their own, should it become vacant. These five are: Eduardo Cojuangco, "coconut czar" and a so-called "crony" of Ferdinand E. Marcos; Imelda Romualdez-Marcos, First Lady and Minister of Ecology and Human Settlements; Juan Fonce Enrile, Minister of Defense; Arturo M. Tolentino, Foreign Minister; and Cesar E.A. Virata, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Eduardo Cojuangco. A politician-businessman from Tarlac (the home province of the late Benigno S. Aquino, Jr.), Eduardo Cojuangco has emerged as a serious contender for the presidency. As one of Ferdinand E. Marcos's cronies, Cojuangco has parlayed his friendship with the president into a vast economic empire and, consequently, considerable political power. In addition to being the acknowledged "czar" of the coconut industry (in his capacity as chairman of the Philippine Coconut Authority), he holds the official rank of ambassador-at-large, is president of the United Coconut Planters Bank, United Coconut Oil Mills, the UNICOM (a management concern), and the Coconut Planters Life Insurance Corporation. In May 1983, Cojuangco acquired substantial holdings in the San Miguel Corporation, the Philippine beer monopoly and one of Southeast Asia's largest business corporations.

Throughout most of the 1960s, Eduardo Cojuangco was the "odd man out" in Tarlac and Central Luzon politics. His first cousin and political foe, Jose Cojuangco, represented the First Congressional District of Tarlac; at the national level, the late Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr.,

was dominant. While Aquino and Jose Cojuangco belonged to the Liberal Party, Eduardo Cojuangco was a Nacionalista and, as such, was a supporter of Ferdinand E. Marcos when the latter was first elected President of the Second Philippine Republic as a Nacionalista in 1965, and was reelected to a second four-year term in 1969.

It is not likely that Eduardo Cojuangco will run for the presidency against his mentor and benefactor Ferdinand E. Marcos in 1987. Should Marcos run, however, there are speculations that Eduardo Cojuangco will be tapped as Marcos's running mate, in defiance of conventional political wisdom and tradition which have vice-presidential candidates chosen on the basis of so-called "geographical balance," i.e., if the presidential candidate is from Luzon, the vice-presidential candidate has to be from either the Visayas or Mindanao, and vice-versa.

Should Cojuangco be drafted as Marcos's running mate, it would be interesting to see if he is able to shed the public suspicion that he was somewhat involved in the Aquino assassination. This rumor has persisted since August 1983 and even the release of the Agrava Commission Report has not totally quieted it down. It will also be interesting to see how the other half of the Marcos political machine, the Romualdez family of Leyte and their supporters, will react to an "all Luzon" Marcos-Cojuangco presidential team.

As far as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is concerned, it is widely believed that Eduardo Cojuangco has the support of General Fabian C. Ver, and a few other AFP flag- and general-level officers. Indeed, in the event of Ferdinand E. Marcos's sudden demise, the AFP might be more favorably disposed to support a "strong leader" like Cojuangco rather than a "weak" leader like Prime Minister Cesar E.A. Virata, who is not regarded as "pro-military." Some AFP insiders even insist that the majority of the officer corps prefer Cojuangco over Ponce Enrile.

Imelda Romualdez-Marcos. In spite of the election setback suffered by the KBL as a group, and Imelda Romualdez-Marcos personally, in the May 1984 parliamentary elections, there are many who continue to believe that the first lady remains a viable contender for her husband's job. This is especially true if the other contenders, say Juan Ponce Enrile and Eduardo Cojuangco on the one hand, and Cesar E. A. Virata on the other, effectively neutralize each other. Romualdez-Marcos would then become a "unity candidate," acceptable to Juan Ponce Enrile and Eduardo Cojuangco supporters.

The outcome of the ongoing investigation of AFP chief of staff General Fabian C. Ver and twenty-four other officers and men cited by the Agrava Commission majority report for alleged complicity in the Aquino assassination will also have a bearing on Romualdez-Marcos's short- and long-term chances at capturing the presidency. It is well known that Imelda Romualdez-Marcos and Fabian C. Ver are political allies and that she could count on the support of the AFP chief of staff,

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especially if President Marcos were to depart from the scene through death by natural causes or voluntary resignation of the presidency. If General Ver is given a clean bill of health by the office of the Tanodbayan<sup>5</sup> and is reinstated to his position as AFP chief of staff, this will help Romualdez-Marcos. If, on the other hand, General Ver is indicted, tried, and convicted, the political fallout generated is bound to have an impact on Imelda Romualdez-Marcos's presidential ambitions.

Another possible problem for Imelda Romualdez-Marcos is her relationship with the Catholic church. While at a personal level, the first lady's earlier and much publicized feud with the spiritual leader of the Philippines' Catholics, Jaime Cardinal Sin<sup>6</sup> has apparently abated, the church's hierarchy has of late become more and more strident in its opposition to the Marcos regime. It is possible that the Catholic church will distance itself from the Marcoses until after the lingering public perception that they were directly or indirectly involved in the Aquino assassination has completely dissipated.

Juan Ponce Enrile. Ferdinand E. Marcos's defense minister since the imposition of martial law in 1972, Juan Ponce Enrile continues to be regarded by presidential prognosticators as a possible successor to President Marcos. An Ilocano from the Cagayan Valley, Ponce Enrile has just been elected to a second term in the Batasang Pambansa, winning rather handily over his closest opponent. (In contrast, the other KBL leader from the region, Minister of State for Political Affairs Leonardo B. Perez, narrowly defeated incumbent Carlos Padilla.)<sup>7</sup> Ponce Enrile's easy victory strengthens his claim as the region's de facto leader in the Batasan and his chances of winning the entire Northern Luzon region should he make a bid for the presidency in 1987.

While it is difficult to gauge the extent of Ponce Enrile's support within the AFP rank and file and officer corps, it is assumed that he too put together an alliance network within and outside the AFP structure during his tenure as defense minister. What Ponce Enrile supporters find disturbing, however, was the relative ease in which AFP Chief of Staff Ver undercut Ponce Enrile's powers as the AFP's civilian titular head late last year. It is interesting to note that Ponce Enrile, in a rare public comment about General Ver's impending legal problems, expressed the opinion that "Ver is gone for good...(that) he will not be back" although he (Ver) will probably "maintain his relationship with the president on a personal basis."<sup>8</sup> If General Ver's effective undercutting of Ponce Enrile's powers was done with foreknowledge and approval of President Marcos, then it is logical to conclude that Ponce Enrile's standing in the eyes of the president has been diminished as well.

Another potential obstacle to Enrile's presidential ambitions is the emergence of Eduardo Cojuangco as a serious contender to succeed Marcos. Ponce Enrile and Cojuangco are political and business associates of long standing. Should Cojuangco choose to decouple himself from Ponce Enrile, or vice versa, Ponce Enrile will no longer be able to count on the support of the KBL organization in Central Luzon, Cojuangco's

political backyard. Another weakness of Ponce Enrile is his reputation as an ideological hardliner, making him unacceptable to KBL moderates who do not rule out some form of accommodation with left-wing groups, including, perhaps, the Communist Party of the Philippines and its political front organization, the National Democratic Front, after Marcos has departed from the scene. Ponce Enrile's relationship with the Catholic church is also a big question mark since it was Ponce Enrile who served as President Marcos's point man in the regime's confrontation with the church hierarchy over dissident clergy in mid-1983.

Arturo M. Tolentino. A veteran and savvy politician of the "old school," Arturo M. Tolentino was one of six KBL candidates who survived the opposition landslide in Metro Manila in last May's elections. Currently, Philippine Foreign Minister Tolentino has a reputation as a political maverick. Tolentino represented the Third Congressional District of the city of Manila for many years in the defunct House of Representatives, and then he was elevated to the Philippines Senate, where he served with Marcos while the latter was president of that body. Like Marcos, Arturo M. Tolentino has a reputation as a brilliant constitutional lawyer and, like the late Senator Aquino, was also a fraternity brother of the president's at the University of the Philippines.

As pointed out earlier, Tolentino led the fight in the Batasan for the abolition of the executive committee and the restoration of the office of vice-president as a way of clarifying the line of succession in the event of the president's untimely demise or incapacitation. That did not exactly endear him to Marcos loyalists in the Batasan who saw the amendment as a transparent attempt to undercut the president's executive powers. It did impress independent-minded KBL assemblymen as well as the old Nacionalistas in the ruling party who saw in Tolentino a leader around whom to rally. The debate over the proposed amendment came at a time when public cynicism about the government, in the aftermath of the Aquino assassination, was at its highest. Arturo M. Tolentino's masterful steering of the succession amendment through the Batasan, and the independence it signified, may have saved him from going down in defeat, the fate of all the other Batasan members in Metro Manila.

Without a doubt, Tolentino is regarded as a "long-shot" contender to succeed Ferdinand E. Marcos. Although at 70 he is older than Marcos, he is in much better health. Some of Tolentino's staff members suggest that he is not interested in the presidency; that, instead, he has found his niche in the foreign ministry. The latter capacity puts him in an ideal position to pursue a life-long interest, i.e., the U.N. organized effort to codify a comprehensive law-of-the-sea. Tolentino has been the Philippines' perennial representative to that conference, and reportedly, a treaty on the law-of-the-sea is the legacy he wishes to leave behind. Also unknown is how the armed forces of the Philippines would react to a Tolentino candidacy and the degree of support that he currently enjoys among the top echelon of the AFP officer corps.



Cesar E.A. Virata. Prime Minister Cesar E.A. Virata, named by Ferdinand E. Marcos as his preferred successor in March 1983, remains a contender for the presidency, although his chances of becoming president have declined considerably. Virata's chances received a much-needed boost when he ran for and won a parliamentary seat in his home province of Cavite in last May's parliamentary elections. Before that, Virata had never been elected to public office, having been appointed to the interim Batasang Pambansa by President Marcos. Although Cavite, a small province in the southern Tagalog region, is too small to qualify as a power base, Virata has demonstrated that he is electable and can, if he chooses to, adapt to the country's rough and rambunctious style of political campaigns. (He won over Imelda Romualdez-Marcos's close friend Helena Benitez.) In so doing, Virata has dispelled some of the doubts that he is much too aloof and cerebral, even bland, to appeal to voters nationwide or be able to withstand the rigors of an old-fashioned presidential campaign.

Virata's detractors will probably criticize his "dismal record" as the Philippines' principal economic manager, as reflected in the country's high unemployment, high inflation, budgetary deficits, and a staggering foreign debt. In fact, the campaign against him, orchestrated by Nacionalista and Liberal "old guards" now affiliated with the ruling KBL, began as early as April 14, 1983, at a party caucus attended by Ferdinand E. Marcos himself. However, Prime Minister Virata continues to have the support of most of the regime's technocrats as well as the tacit endorsement of the World Bank/International Monetary Fund and other international lending institutions.

It is not certain if Virata can count on the support of any of the top generals and admirals in the armed forces of the Philippines although it is believed that acting AFP Chief of Staff General Fidel V. Ramos and Prime Minister Virata hold each other in mutual respect--perhaps because of their virtually identical social and intellectual backgrounds. Should General Ramos still be acting AFP chief of staff, if and when the presidential vacancy occurs, or, better still, if General Ramos is elevated to the position of permanent chief of staff (in the event of General Ver's indictment and conviction), this might boost Virata's chances. The two, Ramos and Virata, appear, at least on the surface, to be natural allies and might well go ahead and forge a formal coalition between themselves and their followers.

#### Contenders From The Opposition

The one person many believed could have united and galvanized the country's fragmented and fractious opposition groups was killed, an official government report now suggests, by an assassin in the employ of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. It may well be that that was the real reason why Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., was killed on August 21, 1983, i.e., to eliminate him forever as a contender for the presidency, either as an interim "unity government" caretaker or as a permanent replacement, should elections be held as scheduled in 1987. Ironically for the Marcos regime, Aquino's death provoked a tremendous anti-Marcos and anti-

government backlash that despite internal divisions and the absence of a consensus leader, the opposition, led by the UNIDO, scored some spectacular electoral victories over the ruling KBL, especially in Metro Manila.<sup>9</sup>

There is little doubt that, had Senator Aquino lived, he would have been a virtually unanimous choice to run against Marcos in 1987. How Aquino would have fared in a head-to-head competition with President Marcos will always be open to conjecture. It should be recalled, though, that Aquino had been out of the country for three years; before that, he was in government custody for nearly eight years and while incarcerated was effectively denied access to the mass media. In his only other post-martial-law run for public office, an unsuccessful bid for a seat in the interim Batasang Pambansa in 1978, he was tarred with the "foreign agent" brush by Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. In retrospect, it is doubtful whether Aquino could have defeated Ferdinand E. Marcos and the KBL in 1987. This is the reason why even some Marcos supporters in the Batasan expressed shock at the "utter stupidity" of Aquino's assassination. These critics point out that it would have been in the better interests of the KBL if Aquino were permitted to contest the 1987 elections and then dealt a decisive defeat at the polls.

There are at least three names that are frequently mentioned whenever the matter of the presidential election scheduled for 1987 is discussed. These three opposition leaders are: former senator and now Batasan member Eva Estrada-Kalaw; Cagayan de Oro mayor and Pilipino Democratic Party (PDP)-Laban leader Aquilino Pimentel; and the putative leader of the United Nationalist Democratic Organization, former senator and Batasan member Salvador H. Laurel of Batangas. (Laban is the party label used by Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., and 20 other candidates who ran against the KBL slate in April 1978.)

Eva Estrada-Kalaw. Estrada-Kalaw was the top vote-getter in Metro Manila in the May 14, 1984, parliamentary elections. Because she is a veteran of the defunct Philippine senate and has previously been elected to national office, Estrada-Kalaw has ample name recognition throughout the country, especially among older voters. Even though the Philippines has elected several other women politicians into high office in the past, it is problematical whether Filipinos are prepared to choose Eva Estrada-Kalaw over Ferdinand E. Marcos. He not only has all the advantages of incumbency, but, in addition, the well-financed and well-oiled KBL organization nationwide, which has ensured KBL victories in the last two elections. Moreover, Estrada-Kalaw disavows any interest in the presidency, insisting that she can serve the people better in the Batasan.

Salvador H. Laurel. Senator Laurel appears to have emerged, in the post-Aquino era, as the leader of the moderate political opposition, an amorphous coalition of often shifting individuals and groups called the UNIDO. Like Eva Estrada-Kalaw, Laurel served two terms in the defunct Philippine senate. He also served for six years in the interim Batasang

Pambansa as one of thirteen opposition members in that body. Many of Laurel's supporters believe that he made a mistake when he decided not to run for reelection to the Batasan. So far, however, Senator Laurel's absence from the Batasan has apparently not impaired his access to the mass media. Laurel even managed to secure a meeting with Vice-President George P. Bush in a recent visit to the United States.

Like Estrada-Kalaw, Laurel is also identified with the "old school" politicians of the Second Philippine Republic and has been known to vacillate on key issues, such as the presence of American military installations in the Philippines. Salvador H. Laurel's reluctance to make clear-cut commitments on key issues has hurt his image among the younger generation of voters who, paradoxically, seem to find more things in common with much older leaders like Senators Lorenzo M. Tanada and Jose W. Diokno and their JAJA (Justice for Aquino, Justice for All) movement. Furthermore, like Estrada-Kalaw and even Aquilino Pimentel, the appeal of Laurel may be more regional than it is national.

Aquilino Pimentel. One of the younger opposition leaders who burst into the national political scene shortly before the declaration of martial law in 1972, Aquilino Pimentel is mayor of Cayagan de Oro (in the province of Misamis Oriental) and, until recently, one of the province's representatives to the Batasang Pambansa.<sup>10</sup> Pimentel leads an organization called the Pilipino Democratic Party (PDP), a splinter group from both the UNIDO and the Mindanao Alliance. Like the Mindanao Alliance, the PDP is based in northern Mindanao and has no national organization to speak of. Pimentel will probably fare very well among young voters, Mindanao voters, and in Metro Manila, where his PDP is allied with Laban and where he enjoys considerable media exposure and therefore good name recognition. It is not known how Pimentel will perform in other regions of the country, especially in northern and central Luzon, Ferdinand E. Marcos's and Eduardo Cojuangco's respective political bailiwicks.

Another Pimentel drawback may be the perception that he is "much too radical ideologically," and, rightly or wrongly, too closely identified with the National Democratic Front (NDF), an image which regime propagandists have been only too happy to exploit. Philippine voters, like their counterparts in the United States and elsewhere, have been known to shun candidates and causes that they perceive as "extremist," opting instead for those that are perceived as "moderate" or "centrist." If Pimentel is nominated by the UNIDO (unlikely at the moment, but not implausible) as its standard bearer or fielded by his PDP-Laban coalition as a third party candidate, he would probably take more votes away from Salvador H. Laurel than he would from the KBL standard bearer. This would ensure the reelection of Ferdinand E. Marcos or the election of Marcos's handpicked successor.

Other names, such as those of businessmen Enrique Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Ongpin, and of late even Benigno S. Aquino, Jr.'s younger brother Agapito Aquino (better known as "Butch") have also been

mentioned as possible contenders. Zobel de Ayala's and Ongpin's main political vehicle has been the Malcati Business Club, of which they are president and vice-president, respectively. None of the three have actual political power bases nor have held elective public office, and it is highly doubtful that they would risk jeopardizing their careers, vast business holdings, or both, to run opposite Ferdinand E. Marcos or the KBL standard bearer (if other than Marcos) in 1987.

#### Conclusions And Observations

It is clear that Ferdinand E. Marcos's "New Republic" is mired in a crisis of legitimacy. While the crisis was to a large extent triggered by the brutal assassination of Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., on August 21, 1983, and the Marcos government's witting or unwitting attempts to cover up the crime, the roots of the crisis are deep-organized dissidence. (The Philippines' communist insurgency is the only growing insurgency of its kind in Southeast Asia.) Because of unemployment, inflation, and foreign debt, public alienation vis-a-vis the regime is at an all time high; even groups that originally applauded the imposition of martial rule and the regime's economic policies have now joined ranks with traditional opposition groups, questioning the very legitimacy of the regime and its right to govern. The Catholic church has openly urged President Marcos to step down, open up the political process, and help restore participatory democracy. On July 22, 1984, for instance, 110 Filipino Catholic bishops, in a pastoral letter read at Sunday masses throughout the Philippines, called on him to relinquish his authority to issue decrees.<sup>11</sup> So far Marcos has refused to accede to the bishops' request.

The "succession amendment," which abolished the executive committee and restored the office of vice-president, was first worked out by President Marcos in a meeting with business, church, and opposition leaders on December 5, 1983, and later drafted as the Tolentino amendment which the Filipino people ratified on January 27, 1984. Whether the "new" succession procedure will work to defuse growing opposition to the regime is not yet known. The fact that the new succession scheme does not become effective until 1987, however, has created doubts in the minds of many people about the sincerity of the Marcos regime. Understandably, there are some who believe that the restoration of the office of vice-president was, for all intents and purposes, nothing more than a pyrrhic victory for the opposition and the amendment's supporters and, at best, a cosmetic change. As things currently stand, President Marcos can still handpick a successor.

The designation of the Speaker of the Batasang Pambansa as head of state on a caretaker basis, while the nation girds for a presidential election, may look good on paper. However, the incumbent speaker of the Batasan is Nicanor Yniguez, Sr., of Leyte del Sur, an old Marcos-Romualdez loyalist. Speaker Yniguez may be expected to carry out the president's orders or those of the first lady's; in any case he will not do anything that might jeopardize Imelda Romualdez-Marcos's chances to succeed her departed husband.

While public alienation vis-a-vis the Marcos regime has reached a new nadir, no major changes in personnel or government policies seem to be forthcoming. This is because of the way the electoral system is set up, the open partisanship of individual members of the Commission on Elections, the inability of the opposition to unite under one leader and one platform, and the systematic blocking out of viable opposition leaders from the public eye, except in Metro Manila where the reach of the mass media is pervasive. This is not to say that the various opposition groups will not continue to gain inroads into the KBL's stranglehold on the Batasan. By and large, however, the KBL will continue to dominate the Batasan, and KBL candidates will continue to prevail.

Crucial to any prognostication, of course, is an analysis of the roles the Catholic church, the United States, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines will play in the succession picture. It seems logical to suggest that if the Catholic church decided to go all out against the Marcos regime and the KBL and spearheaded an organized and spirited campaign against both parties, President Marcos and the KBL would be in for a lot of trouble. The fact of the matter, however, is that the church hierarchy, which faithfully adheres to Vatican dogma on depolitization, will discourage any organized attempts to topple the Marcos regime, although it will tolerate individual bishops and priests who choose to speak out on the issues.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the other organization which can, if it so desires, force President Marcos into some modus vivendi with the various opposition groups. If the AFP remains steadfast in its loyalty to Marcos, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to institute any radical changes in the nineteen-year-old regime's leadership and structure. If the AFP, on the other hand, decide to uphold the law and the constitution, maintain a strictly neutral policy stance vis-a-vis Ferdinand E. Marcos and his KBL candidates, and help eliminate (or reduce to the barest minimum) voter fraud, election terrorism, and tampering with election returns, the opposition parties will have a more than even chance to elect enough assemblymen to eventually capture the majority in the Batasan.

American support for the KBL and Marcos could be a double-edged sword. A U.S. policy of disassociation may help the cause of the opposition in that this could be construed as a signal that the United States does not intend to interfere in domestic Philippine political matters. At the same time, it could help President Marcos and the KBL if Marcos succeeds in turning the United States into a convenient scapegoat and strawman all rolled up into one. He used this once before, i.e., in 1978 when his foreign secretary (Carlos P. Romulo) filed a protest with then Secretary of State Cyrus Vance about Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Pat Derian's alleged meddling in the 1978 parliamentary elections. While many Filipinos dislike President Marcos and the KBL, they felt a need to register their protest against "blatant U.S. interference in the domestic affairs of the Philippines," more than they needed to rebuke Marcos and his party.

If the succession picture--either as a result of Ferdinand E. Marcos's sudden demise or his running for reelection in 1987--clears up within the next two or three years, and the transition from one leader to another is smooth and uneventful, the Philippine government's legitimacy would be well on its way toward being restored, not only in the eyes of Filipinos but also in the eyes of the rest of the world. If, on the other hand, the succession picture is marred by internecine violence and political mayhem, the Philippines could well be plunged into a bloody civil war which will be both costly and catastrophic--especially to the Filipino people.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. The Agrava Commission Report is the culmination of over a year of investigation by a five-person committee on the circumstances surrounding the assassination of former Senator Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., at the Manila International Airport on August 21, 1983. The minority version submitted to President Marcos on October 24, 1984, by the commission chairperson, Justice Corazon Juliano-Agrava, implicated an Air Force general and 22 other military men in the plot to kill Aquino although it absolved AFP Chief of Staff Fabian C. Ver of any complicity in the assassination. The majority report, meanwhile, named two generals and AFP Chief of Staff Ver along with 22 enlisted personnel as "indictable" for the assassination of the opposition leader. For an excellent account of the submission of both versions of the report to President Marcos on October 24, 1984, see The Christian Science Monitor, October 24, 1984, pp. 1, 32.
2. For a discussion of the makeup, intent and actual membership of the Executive Committee, see Benjamin N. Muego, "The Executive Committee in the Philippines: Successors, Power Brokers, and Dark Horses," Asian Survey, v. XXIII (November 1983), pp. 1159-1170.
3. Ibid., pp. 1160-1162
4. Although Imelda Romualdez-Marcos did not herself run for a Batasan seat in Metro Manila, she campaigned hard for the entire slate of 211 KBL candidates. Only six KBL incumbents won, in sharp contrast to the 1978 election when all 21 KBL candidates prevailed. Even more galling to the first lady was the fact that among those who won were "independents" such as Arturo M. Tolentino. (While Tolentino was officially KBL, he campaigned as an "independent" KBLer.)
5. The office of Tanodbayan (literally translated, it means "people's guardian" or "people's sentinel," or "town guard") is a special judicial body established under the 1973 Constitution.

6. The sharp exchange between Imelda Romualdez-Marcos and Jaime Cardinal Sin was triggered by the alleged screening of "pornographic films" during the recent Manila International Film Festival organized and hosted by the first lady. For the complete story, see Sheila Ocampo-Kalfors, "MIFF Sin MIFFs Sin," Far Eastern Economic Review, February 17, 1983, p.30.
7. Incumbent Carlos Padilla led most of the way until the ballot boxes were transferred to the Headquarters of the Philippine Constabulary in the provincial capital. Padilla filed a formal election protest now pending resolution by the Commission on Elections, which hears election protests of this nature.
8. See Christian Science Monitor, October 26, 1984, pp. 9, 10.
9. For a discussion of the implications of the UNIDO's election landslide victory in Metro Manila, see Marjorie A. Niehaus, "Philippines in Turmoil: Implications for U.S. Policy," Major Issues System. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1984, pp. 2-5; cf., "The Situation in the Philippines," a staff report prepared for the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984, pp. 3-11.
10. For an excellent discussion of the background of Aquilino Pimentel's ouster from the Batasang Pambansa, see Christian Science Monitor, November 7, 1984, pp. 9, 10.
11. Niehaus, op. cit., p. 11.

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PANEL II  
Paper Two

SUCCESSION AND LEGITIMACY IN MALAYSIA

by

FRED R. von der MEHDEN  
Rice University

Questions of succession and legitimacy in Malaysia are made both easier and more difficult by the basically democratic, party-based system which forms the parameters within which the nation's politics operate. Facilitating analysis is the structured nature of change, based upon party, state, and federal elections, within which the country's leaders have been chosen. With the single exception of the suspension of normal political life following the riots of 1969, the parliamentary process has displayed a continuity that reflects the institutionalization of the system. Thus, there has been a general absence of the extra-constitutional and abrupt changes of power at the top experienced by Indo-China, Burma, and Thailand or the refashioning of the political structure promulgated by Marcos in the Philippines, Suharto in Indonesia, and Ne Win in Burma. On the other hand, the democratic nature of Malaysia's polity opens it to the vagaries of the electoral process, often clouding our picture of the political future of individuals and organizations. Following a brief description of the history of succession prior to the rise to power of the present government, this paper will concentrate upon the bases upon which choices for leadership are made, the foundation of the power structure of the national administration and challenges to its future and, finally, questions surrounding future succession.

History of Succession

Malaysia is most unusual for Southeast Asia, or for Afro-Asia for that matter, in that it has two living former prime ministers, neither in jail nor exile, and both held in generally high esteem by the public. The pattern for the rise to the highest political office in the land has not varied over the 27 years since independence, as every prime minister has previously been deputy president of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) and held the title deputy prime minister (DPM). The DPM is not a constitutional office but established by convention. The deputy prime minister has traditionally been the most trusted lieutenant of the prime minister.

The first prime minister was Tunku Abdul Rahman who had led the country to independence. (He has been called Bapak Merdeka-father of independence and Bapak Malaysia-father of Malaysia.)<sup>1</sup> The Tunku had been president of UMNO since 1951 and headed the ruling coalition, the Alliance (composed of UMNO, the Malayan (later Malaysian) Chinese Association or MCA, and the Malay (later Malaysian) Indian Congress or



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MIC. In addition, he was a member of one of the country's royal houses. His DPM was Abdul Razak bin Hussein, also of aristocratic background and deputy president of UMNO since 1951. Razak was a man with considerable bureaucratic experience and talents in contrast to the Tunku's more political abilities.

In 1969 Malaysia experienced race riots with heavy casualties which led to the suspension of representative government for two years. The Tunku lost a good deal of his Malay support from those who believed that he had paid insufficient attention to their needs. Razak, who had become head of the governing National Operations Council, became prime minister in 1970. A year later Razak became president of UMNO and Hussein Onn became the new DPM and deputy UMNO president. Onn's father had been the founder of UMNO, but both father and son were at odds with the organization in succeeding years. Onn made his peace with UMNO and later became minister of education, a position held at one time by both Razak and Onn's successors. The new DPM was also from an aristocratic family with a long line of Mentri Besars (state chief ministers).

Upon the death of Razak, following an illness, Onn stepped in as president of UMNO and prime minister, with his DPM and deputy president Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad. Like Onn, Mahathir has been in the political wilderness, in his case over differences with the Tunku after the 1969 riots. He had also written a controversial book, The Malay Dilemma, which was banned in Malaysia until he became prime minister. (It was considered too inflammatory.)<sup>1</sup> Mahathir was the first man to hold this position who was not from an aristocratic background. In 1981, Onn, who had been in declining health, stepped down from his government and party posts and Mahathir took his place. His DPM was Musa Hitam, who had been in political exile at the same time as his chief, was also a commoner, and was also later to serve as minister of education. The position of the "Two Ms", as they are called, was formalized at the UMNO triennial conference held in 1981 and reconfirmed in 1984.

#### The Bases of Power

This pattern of succession illustrates several aspects of the political structure and process of Malaysia:

- 1) the dominance of the Alliance-National Front,
- 2) the paramount position of UMNO within the front, and
- 3) the political requirements necessary to rise within UMNO.

The Alliance-National Front: Since independence, Malaysia has been ruled by a single coalition, initially the Alliance and then, with the inclusion of previous opposition parties in the 1970s, the National Front (Barisan Nasional). In the first elections after independence, held in 1959, the Alliance gained 73 out of 104 seats in the federal Parliament. Succeeding elections continued this dominance.<sup>2</sup> Although the Alliance's parliamentary seats fell to only 66 of 114 in 1969 with 48.5 percent of the

total vote, by 1974, the National Front had regained its strength and obtained 135 of 154 seats in an expanded parliament. In the latest general elections, held in 1982, the opposition was able to garner only 14 seats and was later weakened by internal dissension and the arrest of leaders from the Muslim party, Persatuan Islam Sa-Tanah Melayu (PAS).

This overwhelming control of parliament has established the front as the only arena within which there can be any contest for the selection of the prime minister and his cabinet. Every prime minister or major cabinet appointee has maintained his base within the coalition and there are no present signs that this pattern will change. The opposition is to be found primarily within the now radicalized Muslim PAS, and the socialist-oriented, predominately Chinese Democratic Action Party (DAP). Both have displayed serious internal divisions and their separate and largely antithetical constituencies make cooperation between the two highly unlikely--PAS plays to Muslim Malays who are dissatisfied with UMNO's efforts to meet their needs and compromises with other communal organizations, while the DAP's constituency is primarily composed of dissatisfied, less affluent Chinese who perceive the National Front as catering too much to Malay demands.

**The Role of UMNO:** Within both the Alliance and National Front, UMNO has been the dominant partner, holding a majority of the coalition's parliamentary seats since independence.<sup>3</sup>

This position of primacy was increased with the formation of the National Front. While it is true that at that time more posts were granted to non-UMNO representatives and efforts were made to reflect the various parties, there was increasing pressure within UMNO to assure its central role. In part, this assertion of power came through subtle non-official changes, as earlier personal ties, formed during the Tunku's era, were weakened. However, there were also more public signs of UMNO's strength, particularly in the area of economics, where the Malays were attempting to enter sectors previously largely the monopoly of the other communities. Thus, first the commerce ministry came into UMNO hands and then, in 1974, with the retirement of the long-term and generally highly respected MCA leader, Tan Siew Sin, the ministry of finance became a permanent UMNO led post.

The dominance of UMNO within the front has meant that all key ministers at the federal level have had their base in that party, including the prime minister, deputy prime minister, and the heads of home, defense, and finance. This relationship is best illustrated by the integration of the offices of prime minister and deputy prime minister with the offices of president and deputy president of UMNO, having both the government and party offices always held by the same individuals. When there has been a change in prime minister between UMNO elections, such as after the retirements of the Tunku and Onn and the death of Razak, the party has elected the successor as president. Given the expectation that the deputy president, cum DPM, will then take over as prime minister, this can mean bitter intra-party competition over that post, as will be examined in another section.

However, UMNO has also become increasingly influential in the selection process of its partners in the coalition. Not only does the prime minister have the final decision in choice of cabinet membership, but he has also asserted himself into intra-party and intra-coalition politics. Thus, when UMNO's Chinese or Indian counterparts have experienced internal divisions, which often appear endemic to the MCA and MIC, the prime minister has been known to step in to quietly mediate or arbitrate differences. This apparently took place in 1984 when Dr. Mahathir reluctantly entered the tense factional dispute within the MCA. The prime minister has also been involved in settling intra-coalition conflicts and in delineating the number of slots available to coalition partners during elections. For example, in Penang, there has been historic competition between the MCA and the Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia, both members of the front and each desiring a greater role in the state government and increased representation on the ballot. It has fallen upon the prime minister to ultimately decide upon the political balance in the state. All of this makes the UMNO leadership at the core of the political selection process in Malaysia.

**The Role of UMNO Politics:** To the outsider, UMNO politics can appear Byzantine and the bases of advancement within the party often seem unclear. However, over the years, several factors have generally been viewed as most salient, although not absolutely necessary, for upward mobility within the organization.

1. **Support of Malay-Muslim Interests:** It is necessary that the candidates clearly show that they are strong supporters of the Malay-Islamic cause, often involving a tendency to "out-Malay" competition. This often leads to extremist Malay chauvinist statements from younger ambitious party members and has been a hallmark of the UMNO youth. While this practice did not characterize either Razak or Onn, the Tunku was prone to make extremist statements in the early fifties.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Mahathir's Malay Dilemma was perceived as inciting Malay chauvinism, and Musa Hitam was at one time characterized as an "ultra." Upon achieving leadership within UMNO, it is still necessary to maintain legitimacy through at least symbolic support of issues which concern the Malay community, but the rhetoric takes on a different tone.
2. **Pluralism at the Top:** No post-independence Malay politician has reached the position of president or deputy president of UMNO without reflecting concern for his wider community, the multi-racial coalition. Given his position as concomitant leader of the alliance-front, it is no longer possible to simply play to the Malays, as gestures toward the politics of pluralism become necessary. Thus, while Razak and Onn had earlier expressed such flexibility, the Tunku, Mahathir, and Musa Hitam all changed their positions over time. Although similar transformations have taken place

among other UMNO politicians, the narrower views of others have been considered obstacles to their rise to power at the national level.

3. **The Local Base:** It is important for a rising politician to have a strong base in UMNO state politics and to have developed a network of support there. In recent years, the states of Perak, Johore, Penang, and Selangor have contributed a high percentage of upper level leaders, although other states have also served. Thus, in the recent contests over the office of deputy president, Musa Hitam looked to his base in Johore while his chief rival, Tunku Razaleigh Hamzah, had his strength in Kelantan. The continued presence of Razaleigh in the cabinet following his two defeats lay in part in the danger that his dismissal might weaken the party in a state where UMNO has been seriously challenged by the PAS. It is apparent that state leaders are becoming more prominent within UMNO and after its 1984 triennial meeting the supreme council had only seven federal ministers as against ten state chief ministers returned, a major reversal from 1978 when the numbers were twelve and three respectively. It should be noted that there are other constituencies as well. For example, the office of minister of education, a position held by several previous deputy prime ministers, has provided a base among teachers, who have long furnished a sizable number of delegates to state and national assemblies.
4. **The Role of the Prime Minister:** Generally, the voice of the prime minister is to be heard at the time of elections to major party posts, although blatant support is not usually welcome. The role of the Mahathir was particularly noticable in the 1984 triennial elections when many delegates were disturbed by his open endorsement of his DPM. He was also able to quietly obtain a supreme council purged of members not openly backing his policies. This show of strength was not new. Both the Tunku and Razak successfully centralized power in their hands and the former purged a number of key members, including the present president and deputy president of the party.
5. **Personality:** Far more ephemeral has been the role of personality and campaign style, but it has continued to be noted by observers of UMNO elections. This issue was particularly prominent in the 1980 elections for deputy president, when Tunku Razaleigh Hamzah was heavily criticized for acting with too much self-confidence and appearing to want the office too much, traits that did not reflect the studied diffidence expected of Malay candidates. However, given the prime minister's variation from this norm, care has to be taken in assessing this factor.

6. **Money:** In recent years, money has become increasingly important in UMNO elections, to the point where this year the prime minister warned the general assembly of the dangers of becoming a rich man's club and losing its heritage. Some 40 percent of the delegates to that meeting were reported to be from the business community, and the Malay chambers of commerce have been particularly active in UMNO politics. Accusations have also been made that UMNO candidates have attempted to buy elections at the state and federal levels and both the DAP and PAS have used this charge as a campaign issue. This has meant that, at the very least, the candidates have found it necessary to look beyond their traditional local base among representatives of religious, government, party, and education entities and consider financial interests heretofore far less prominent.

#### The Power Base

The next question pertains to the political foundation of the present prime minister. The present power base of Mahathir rests upon a solid foundation of support including UMNO, the National Front, the prime minister's office, and his ability to use symbols and policies.

**UMNO:** At this point in time, there is no real challenger within UMNO to the prime minister.<sup>5</sup> His DPM, Musa Hitam, appears loyal and, to a degree, dependent upon his backing. A number of old-line politicians are obviously losing their political power. Thus, long-term UMNO leaders such as former Foreign Minister Ghazali Shafie and one-time Selangor Mentri Besar and UMNO Youth head Harun Idris are no longer contestants. Even perennial Vice President Ghafar Baba came in only third in recent party elections for the three slots for that office. With his second defeat for deputy president and transfer from finance to trade and industry, Razaleigh is also in at least a temporary eclipse. In the last elections, in addition to Ghazali Shafie, four former ministers lost their party posts including the heads of agriculture, trade, and industry, and welfare. All of this exemplifies the decline of the old guard.

There now are a number of young, ambitious, and technologically-oriented new faces in government, including Anwar Ibrahim, former head of the Muslim youth organization ABIM and now minister of agriculture; Amar Haji Wan Mokhtar Ahmed, chief minister of Tregganu; Abdullah Badawi, recently given the traditionally important ministry of education; Daim Zainuddin, new multi-millionaire minister of finance; and Rais Yatim and Adib Adam, who exchanged posts in land and information. However, none of these men can challenge the "Two Ms" at this point and, for the time being, remain dependent upon the prime minister for their continuing prominence at the national level.

**National Front:** The National Front is both all-powerful at the national level and fractured by intra- and inter-party differences, both

conditions aiding the prime minister. Divisions within the front are obstacles to the rise of any serious challenge from within the coalition. Both the MIC and MCA have again displayed their traditional divisiveness with the latter, in particular, rent by a leadership battle which has included court fights, demonstrations, charges of fraud, and meetings and counter-meetings.<sup>6</sup> In addition, the MCA has been in bitter competition with its National Front rivals for the Chinese constituency. The coalition's divisions in the Borneo states would take another paper in itself. While this divisiveness has not aided party unity and may diminish the voting power of front Chinese candidates in the future, it has enabled the prime minister to act as an arbiter, thus strengthening his power in the front.

**The Office of Prime Minister:** In Malaysian politics, the prime minister's office, when united with the presidency of UMNO, is the most powerful position in the country. Past prime ministers have been able to determine the composition of their cabinets, set the course of policy, and determine the manner in which the media has reported their acts. Even at the state level, the coincidence of National Front power in both the federal and state systems has weakened the autonomy of the latter. In parliament, the dominance of the front, when combined with the weakness of the opposition, leaves little possibility of a viable parliamentary threat to government programs. This does not define Malaysia as an authoritarian state, but, similar to other parliamentary systems with weak opposition parties, this is a cabinet government with few opportunities for MPs on either side of the aisle to effect legislation.<sup>7</sup> When considered in the light of an absence of cabinet ministers with autonomous political power, this leaves the prime minister in a virtually unassailable position. This does not mean that he has been able to get all of his policies through the political system, as evidenced by his efforts to limit the powers of the sultans, but does mean that his continued role of national leader appears very strong.

**The Use of Power:** This prime minister has also shown himself to be a strong, active, even aggressive leader, with an ability effectively to employ symbols to achieve political goals. This can be seen in his handling of governmental efficiency through such symbolic acts as having civil servants and other officials wear name tags, putting time clocks in government offices, and demanding reports of meetings be sent to his office. In order to meet a growing Islamic resurgence that might undermine the pluralist nature of his coalition and strengthen his Muslim opposition, Mahathir has attempted to placate both his Muslim and non-Muslim constituencies without fundamental changes in policy. To achieve the former, an international Muslim university was founded, an Islamic bank was opened with great fanfare, government officials have shown greater interest in Islamic activities, Anwar Ibrahim was coopted into the system, and Malaysia has played host to numerous international Islamic meetings. At the same time, the prime minister has attacked religious extremism and stopped short of acts which would severely strain inter-communal relations.<sup>8</sup> Overall, this prime minister has been a more active leader than his predecessor and has attempted to halt some of the

administrative slippage that had taken place under Onn. He has also been willing to take unpopular or politically difficult stands such as his confrontation with the sultans and budget cuts. While not always successful, Mahathir has shown himself to be a strong and astute force in Malaysian politics.

#### Challenges to Mahathir

We have noted the firm foundation of Mahathir through his position in UMNO, the National Front, and the prime minister's office, as well as his own political abilities. This does not mean that his leadership has not been questioned from outside of those arenas. Three elements challenge his supremacy, although none has the power to force him from office. They are the sultans, the opposition parties, and aspects of the Islamic resurgence.

The Sultans: Nine states of the federation are ruled by hereditary sultans who, every five years, name one from their ranks as king, or Yang Dipertuan Agung. While they have certain real powers in religion and land and must give assent to legislation, they are expected to follow the advice of state and federal political authorities. The relationship between the sultans and the elected representatives has not always been without tension, having at times been jealous of their respective powers. For example, this year the sultans of Perak and Johore, both known for their independent natures, decided upon times for the Ramadan different from the federal authorities. These men were also embroiled in a constitutional crisis when it appeared that one of them would become the next king. The prime minister attempted to curb the powers of the king and sultans both by eliminating their ability to block legislation through withholding their consent and transferring the king's right to declare emergencies to the prime minister. While Mahathir was successful in getting this bill through parliament, he was unable to obtain the consent of the sultans and a compromise was arranged after months of tension. The final agreement merely weakened the king's powers by allowing him only to delay rather than block legislation, and the sultans kept their prerogatives.<sup>9</sup>

While the sultans are not a real threat to Mahathir's power and leadership of the government, they do pose the possibility of undermining his legitimacy among sectors of the Malay community. As I have argued elsewhere:

This crisis underscored several political facets of contemporary Malaysia. There is a growing impatience with the role of the sultans among urban and educated Malays (although such reactions have their seeds in the time of the first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman). Many see them as an anachronism and possible check on government efforts to modernize the society. The attempt also shows the willingness of the prime minister to take on the hereditary rulers of the Malay establishment. Yet, the

necessity of a compromise also demonstrated the disagreement existing in the Malay community over the role of the sultans, the continued loyalty of many Malay politicians to them, and the inability even of a strong and popular prime minister to seriously weaken their powers.<sup>10</sup>

**The Opposition Parties:** At least on the peninsula, opposition parties may actually further strengthen government power. Their aforementioned mutual differences prohibit them from offering an effective combined challenge to the front and with a small minority in parliament they provide no chance to seriously obstruct government policies. At the same time both the DAP and PAS act as warnings to the front partners of the need to maintain cohesion within their parties and the coalition. The DAP, faced with a voting system favoring rural Malay dominated areas, constantly marked with internal divisions, and frequently accused of improper left-wing activities, has not consistently been able to challenge the front's Chinese partners. At the same time, it offers a sign as to what might happen if the Chinese community were to become too dissatisfied.

On its part, the PAS, particularly in its present radical stance, allows the government to raise the spectre of Islamic radicalism and its danger to both UMNO and pluralist politics. This has become particularly important in recent years as the Islamic resurgence has developed within Malaysia. The front leadership has seen this as a factor in both the increasing support for more radical Islamic groups, such as the PAS, and the fostering religious fanaticism which might endanger communal cooperation. Whenever Islamic radicalism from within the fringes of the movement has spilled over into violence, the government has underscored these events as evidence of the fruits of unorthodox religious beliefs. The recent arrests of several PAS leaders on charges of seditious activities again emphasizes the manner in which the government is prepared to deal with religious fanaticism and its efforts to weaken any mobilization of support for its Islamic opposition.

It is difficult to see the government allowing either the DAP or PAS to grow to the point where they might offer a real challenge to the continued dominance of the front. However, the strengthening of the Islamic resurgence could provide a serious danger to the cohesion of the front. Demands for an Islamic state, calls for Muslims and non-Muslims both to follow the Sharia, statements by dakwah groups favoring the Islamization of all Malaysians, the influence of the resurgence on lower levels of the civil service and military, all of these could undermine the pluralist nature of the society and do worry non-Muslims. Efforts by the Mahathir administration to at least symbolically support the growth of Islam may put it in good stead with its Muslim constituency, but it can also reinforce more radical sentiment and reinforce fears among non-Muslims. Yet, even in this instance, any dangers to the regime's power remain distant.



### Future Succession

We can finally turn to some general comments as to who might succeed Dr. Mahathir as prime minister. The foregoing analysis would appear to strongly support the contention that he will remain in power at least through this decade and into the next. (The Tunku was prime minister for more than a dozen years.)<sup>11</sup> The prime minister is 59 and his DPM is 50. To project past that time as to his possible successor is difficult at best. It should be noted that Onn, Mahathir, and Musa Hitam were all once in the political wilderness, although several probabilities can be forwarded. Within the present political structure, the individual who follows Mahathir will in all likelihood be:

1. Malay
2. From UMNO
3. Part of the United Front

These projections obviously necessitate no sophisticated analysis, based as they are upon the expectation that there will be no extra-constitutional change of government. The present administration has shown itself ready to assure civilian control over the military, and the armed forces, on their part, have displayed no predilection to follow neighboring Indonesia's support of dwi-fungsi (a combined civil and military role for the armed forces). The officer class of the military and police is predominately Malay and would be expected to back the continued rule of its civilian counterparts. Also, the government has increased its expenditures (with some major retrenchment during the recent recession) on the military during the past decade and shown its willingness to defend the nation internally and externally.

This leaves the final question as to what might happen in the case of Dr. Mahathir's demise or incapacity. (He appears quite healthy at this time.) If past custom were to be followed, and Mahathir has stated that it need not be, then Musa Hitam would step in as both prime minister and president of UMNO. Musa Hitam has not been without opposition within UMNO, particularly from the "old guard." He won his position as deputy president over Tunku Razaleigh by 722 to 517 in 1981 and 744 to 501 in 1984. Yet, if he continues to have the support of Mahathir, it is to be expected that he will be able to build an even stronger political base within the party. If a change were necessitated in the short run, then there might very well be a bitter fight within UMNO for both the presidency and deputy presidency. However, we can only conjecture as to the character of relationships at the top into the next decade. Meanwhile, unless the highly unexpected takes place, the leadership of Malaysia is a known factor for the foreseeable future.

# 1

## FOOTNOTES

1. For biographies of the first Prime Ministers see A. Aziz, W. K. Cheong and T. K. Jee, The Architect of Merdeka: Tunku Abdul Rahman Singapore: Tan Kah Jee, 1957; H. Miller, Prince and Premier, London: Harrap, 1959; Anwar Abdullah, Dato Onn, Petaling Jaya: Pustaka Nusantara; and W. Shaw, Tun Razak: His Life and Times, Kuala Lumpur: Longmans, 1976
2. Mahathir bin Mohamad, The Malay Dilemma, Singapore: Asia Pacific Press, 1970.
3. For analyses of early elections see R. Milne and K. Ratnam, The Malayan Parliamentary Elections of 1964, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya, 1967; T. Smith, "The Malayan Elections of 1959," Pacific Affairs, v. 33 (1960); R. Vasil, The Malayan General Election of 1969, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1972.
4. For analyses of UMNO see J. Funston, Malay Politics in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1980.
5. R. Vasil, Politics in a Plural Society, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 6
6. See the Far Eastern Economic Review, June 7 and 14, 1984 and July 26, 1984.
7. For a description of the MCA dispute see Far Eastern Economic Survey, March 29, 1984 and May 17, 1984 and Asiaweek, May 4, 1984.
8. Constitutional and other legal limitations on public discussion of sensitive political issues such as special rights for the Malays also restricts debate over issues that could be employed to challenge the government.
9. See D. Mauzy and R. Milne, "The Mahathir Administration in Malaysia: Discipline Through Islam," Pacific Affairs, v. 56 (Winter 1983-84), pp. 617-648.
10. See Far Eastern Economic Review, December 1, 1983 and February 23, 1984.
11. Fred R. von der Mehden, "Malaysia - A Political Survey," paper for Conference on Malaysia, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, November, 1984, pp. 11-12.
12. In a parliamentary system, with no legal restrictions on time in office, it is not necessary to establish marshal law to perpetuate oneself in office, particularly if there are other ways of maintaining a parliamentary majority.

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**PANEL II**  
**Paper Three**

**DYNAMIC TENDENCIES IN INDONESIA'S AUTHORITARIAN REGIME**

by

**DWIGHT Y. KING**  
Northern Illinois University

That a society and its politics are in constant change seems incontestable. Yet, this truism needs to be re-examined in the case of contemporary Indonesia. Compared to most other states in Southeast Asia, in Central and South America, and to itself under the "Old Order," Indonesia has experienced remarkable stability in leadership and policy continuity under the New Order. President Suharto will soon mark his twentieth year of continuous leadership, the dual role of the armed forces has been continuously maintained, and GOLKAR has obtained an electoral majority of around 60 percent in three successive national elections.

Policy continuity is equally striking. The economic course chartered in the late 1960s that adheres to price stabilization, integration within the international (capitalist) economic order, and a steady widening of market determinations or economic liberalization, has experienced only relatively minor deviations. Except perhaps for the annexation of East Timor, foreign policies have, by and large, earned a reputation for balance, moderation, and predictability. Stability and continuity may give the impression of political stasis, equilibrium or, in the words of social scientists, institutionalization or even political development. Has the rate of change at least been noticeably slowed and the prospect of sudden and dramatic change substantially diminished?

Against this impression of permanence and continuity in Indonesian political affairs, it can be argued that Indonesians themselves take a more dynamic view. The conceptual formulation of "national resilience" by the Indonesian military posits an integral role for them in a changing society and presumably in the never ending nation-building process. Most Indonesians who have been under strong Javanese cultural influence view their collective future more in cyclical than in open or non-deterministic historical terms. Take for example, the prophecy attributed to Jayabaya, ancient King of Kediri, of a cycle consisting of stages appearing approximately every 20 years (Kertayuga, tertayuga, dyaparayuga, and kaliyuga). Current events are perceived as auspicious signs of the imminent return of past phenomena or coming into reality of past predictions.

In this paper, I want to review what several recent interpreters of Indonesian (national) politics have argued about change or, as I have put it in the title, dynamic tendencies, if any. I then will evaluate some of them in light of the current empirical situation and

some "hunches" gained from the comparative study of authoritarian regimes.

#### A Variety of Views

In an article entitled "Old State, New Society," Benedict Anderson imputes to the New Order the extractive, punitive, anti-national, and expansionary character of its lineal ancestor--the Dutch colonial state. The consistent leitmotiv of the New Order, Anderson writes, "has been the strengthening of the state-qua-state." Just like the church, the university, and the modern corporation (institutions of the same species), "the state not only has its own memory but harbors self-preserving and self-aggrandizing impulses, which, at any given moment, are expressed through its living members, but which cannot be reduced to their passing personal ambitions."<sup>1</sup> Not only has the power of the state vis-a-vis society been vastly enhanced, but, within the state, the center came decisively to dominate the periphery.<sup>2</sup> Citing Nordlinger's study of military-dominated regimes, Anderson further notes that the New Order belongs to a distinct minority among military-dominated regimes in that it has never publicly proclaimed itself an emergency, provisional, or even tutelary regime. It holds out no prospects for a "return to civilian rule" or a "restoration of representative government."

"The state leadership has attempted to persuade its audiences that this no-change future is legitimate, by insisting that a peculiarly Indonesian form of democracy is actually already in place: Pancasila Democracy."<sup>3</sup> Finally, Anderson says he doubts that there was any dramatic change in the class structure between, say 1955 and 1975, although he notes that the class base of the New Order has not yet been the subject of systematic research.

Surveying developments in 1983, Donald Emmerson held that "the changes in military and cabinet leadership, the measures to strengthen the economy, and the achievements in foreign policy served to consolidate the regime against future challenges."<sup>4</sup> He seemed to place less emphasis than Anderson on consolidation and strengthening of the state-qua-state, and more emphasis on regime strategies/policies to strengthen its control over the state. Said differently, Emmerson postulated greater institutionalization of the New Order so that it "became more likely to survive its founder."<sup>5</sup>

By making this distinction between greater institutionalization of the regime but, presumably, no change in the state, Emmerson remained consistent with views he set forward in earlier articles. In his now well-known essay "Bureaucracy in Political Context,"<sup>6</sup> he identified internal contradictions in the state apparatus, despite New Order success in making it into more of an instrument and less an arena of conflicting interests. For instance, inter-agency rivalries and keeping the economy open defeated efforts to keep the polity closed. More recently in an article entitled "Understanding the New Order,"<sup>7</sup> he perceived limited, bureaucratic pluralism which varied with the policy area. Using data on

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military penetration of the higher central bureaucracy and a case study of the policy debate regarding industrial growth in Aceh, he found close regime control of the most security-connected parts of the bureaucracy, and that the entire bureaucracy ("a set of programmatic organizations") is superseded by higher personalistic and clientalistic ties (i.e., regime dominated). However, the roles within the bureaucracy of relatively civilian organizations with characteristic policy positions that reflect programmatic mandates (e.g., Departments of Industry, Public Works) must be taken seriously. "The New Order is not a homogenized antithesis of the nation it claims to represent."<sup>8</sup> One might wonder, is limited, bureaucratic pluralism increasing? Emmerson predicted that decline in real economic growth and retrenchment in government plans and budget might result in decreasing autonomy of the economic ministries.

In a very recent manuscript entitled "Suharto's Indonesia: Personal Rule and Political Institutions,"<sup>9</sup> R. William Liddle writes that a low-level of political institutionalization has begun to replace personal rule.

What is being institutionalized is the "New Order Pyramid:" a dominant Presidency, a politically active armed forces, a decision-making process centered in the bureaucracy, and a pattern of state-society relations that combines cooptation and responsiveness with repression. Political parties, including the government's own Golkar, are not central institutions in this system.

Liddle acknowledges that the "critical problem" for his argument is that post-succession continuity has not yet been tested. Nevertheless, implementation of a set of policies that have been highly successful in creating and maintaining the pyramid makes it unlikely that anyone who has a chance at replacing Suharto would want to change the system. Liddle points to policies that have repressed the organized political opposition, that have built positive, (material) interest-based support within key, politically important constituencies, and that have created a legitimizing political culture based on "bureaucratic populism."

Where are the sources of change or potential change in Liddle's analysis? The key factor in the system is the skillful management of President Suharto. Thus, "there is still much room for the idiosyncratic behavior of an incumbent President to shake the structure....Conversely, the dominant presidency may also turn out to be a flexible instrument for responding to the new demands generated by continuing economic development."<sup>10</sup> The dominance of the presidency and Suharto's reluctance to begin making arrangements for succession mean that replacing Suharto will be a "moment of great crisis," yet Liddle feels that the odds are good that the New Order pyramid will survive its founder due to the special position of the military and the attention paid by Suharto and other senior officers to "the feeding and fanning of the younger officers, in particular to their incorporation into the cukong system."<sup>11</sup>

By "cukong system," Liddle means the elaborate network of government-business relations in which Chinese businessmen are protected by officials in return for shares of the profits.

Yet Liddle mentions some additional factors that might be a source of change as well. It is impossible to know the extent to which the New Order's support rests on performance legitimation, as opposed to repression of opposition and symbolic legitimation. If it rests most heavily on performance, then a slowing down of the economy with fewer benefits to be dispensed could be change producing, as could the very success in such policy areas as elementary education which generates pressure on the secondary and tertiary systems and on urban labor markets.

Less important, perhaps, are some tensions within the symbolic legitimation supports. Suharto has made constitutionalism into one of his major ideological pillars. But his commitment is more to the letter than the spirit of the constitution. The evidence of public debate indicates that the politically relevant public sees inconsistency in the president's espousal of constitutionalism, on the one hand, and manipulation of parties, unfair election practices, and military executions of recidivists without legal process, on the other. In other words, having been invoked to help legitimate the New Order--which came to power extra-constitutionally--constitutional procedures (e.g., election process, rule of law, etc.) assume a "life of their own" which constrain the president and shape public confidence in his leadership. Yet, Liddle sees the demand for political participation among business and working classes as low compared with the Philippines. Moreover, "the New Order leadership understands the relationship between squeaky wheels and grease, between the demands of powerful social groups and the need to respond to them."<sup>12</sup>

Another ideological pillar in Liddle's analysis is dwi-fungsi, the doctrine that requires the armed forces to perform "twin functions" of national defense and a "positive socio-political role." Liddle sees some dimensions of potential conflict here as well: "whether the military should be only one among many interest groups on the political stage or should exercise principal responsibility for government; whether dwi-fungsi should be manifest only in times of crisis and latent during normal times or be a constant feature of government; and whether or not society as a whole should be extensively involved in military planning and exercises."<sup>13</sup> Debate on these issues is likely to intensify when Suharto's grip on power lessens.

#### Assessment

All three observers whose writings were reviewed above are in accord in perceiving consolidation and institutionalization of the New Order. All expect that the type of regime established by Suharto will survive him. None expects major changes within this type of regime for the foreseeable future; Emmerson and Liddle say so explicitly; Anderson

implies that the state is now stronger than any time since 1942 and that little change has occurred in the class structure. Yet despite this unanimity, Emmerson and, especially, Liddle identify several internal tensions and sources of potential conflict and change. Let us examine some of these more closely:

1. Precursive Conditions and National Political Culture. To what extent does the New Order's capacity to endure over time--now a generation or nearly two decades--enhance the likelihood of its survival after Suharto and continuity of its policies? I submit there are grounds for more doubts than reflected in the writings reviewed above. In thinking about compliance, support, and legitimacy of any given regime, we usually assume that the "longer a regime can remain in power, the more the turnover of generations works to its advantage for its presence becomes normal in a cognitive sense and...increasingly in a normative sense as well."<sup>14</sup> This would seem to be reinforced in the case of Indonesia, where the problems and mistakes of the Sukarno era are now deeply imprinted on institutional as well as personal memory and have enhanced the opportunity for creative and positive responses by New Order leaders. In addition, certain "cultural congruences" are widely believed to exist between Old Javanese political notions and the authoritarian type of rule that began to emerge around 1957.

Two reasons come to mind why the political culture might be supportive of a greater range of possibilities than we commonly think. The first relates to the framework proposed by Anderson in the article cited above for interpreting modern Indonesian politics. If we take seriously the argument that the amalgam "nation-state" conjoins a popular, participatory nation with an older, adversarial state which descends from the colonial state, that parliamentary democracy survived in Indonesia until about 1957 not out of (unwise) imitation of the West but rather because "no other form of regime was possible," and that it was above all the massive inflows of external funds through the "annual IGGI fix" and the OPEC windfall that allowed Suharto to build the most powerful state in Indonesia since Dutch colonial times, then we will need to recognize that cultural preference for the New Order-type authoritarian regime may be weaker or more divided than usually supposed.

Secondly, unlike other types of regimes (democratic, authoritarian-mobilizational), authoritarian regimes are likely to show a steady decline in citizen-subject allegiance over time. In an article subtitled "Retrospective Thoughts on the Demise of Authoritarian Rule in Portugal," Philippe Schmitter observed:

The deliberate cultivation of compliance rather than enthusiasm; the use of intermediary associations for social control rather than political mobilization; the inability of their anti-utopian, "realistic" ideology to compete with the attractions of such utopian and widely disseminated Weltanschauung as liberalism, socialism, and communism; the

declining marginal returns from repeated appeals to patriotism, national heritage, external enemies, etc.; the sheer complacency of men who have been in power so long--all conspire to make it especially difficult for such regimes to retain the active allegiance of their supporters and beneficiaries during the course of their political careers, and even more difficult for them to transmit such supportive values across generations.<sup>15</sup>

That the New Order is concerned with citizen-subject allegiance can be inferred from the intensive debate within Indonesia on the nature of Pancasila and its role in Indonesian society that has been waging since the late 1970s.<sup>16</sup> For example, in 1979, the government embarked upon an extensive program of two-week seminars on Upgrading Course on the Directives for the Realization and Implementation of Pancasila<sup>17</sup> which were obligatory for all civil servants below the rank of minister, as well as all Indonesian students planning to study abroad. Other groups found it advisable or prudent to organize their own Pancasila courses and the government subsequently extended the courses to other groups such as prisoners and all first-year university students. The regime had school textbooks which deal with Pancasila rewritten, and the role of Pancasila Moral Education became the focus of national discussion. In 1982, Suharto declared that all "mass organizations" would be required to accept Pancasila as their single basic principle. This was followed by the introduction of the draft bill to the national parliament which would make this requirement a law. It is still pending, and Islamic groups' displeasure with it is allegedly one factor in the recent rioting in Tanjung Priok and bombings of the offices of the Bank Central Asia.

However, a comparative perspective suggests that deliberate efforts at "civic and moral education" have usually been farcical and have contributed more to a political culture of cynicism than to one directly and self-consciously supportive of authoritarian rule.

2. Unorganized Opposition. Most observers of contemporary Indonesian politics agree that there are no opposition parties with political resources to mount a challenge to the New Order regime. Yet the possibility of a resurgence of Islam in the political arena remains a concern of the regime, witness the further domestication of organized Islam engineered at the first national congress of the Muslim Teacher's Party (Nahdlatul Ulama), formerly the primus inter pares within the composite United Development Party (PPP), which was upstaged by John Naro of the Muslim Indonesia group and his supporters. They streamlined the party's structure to place it more firmly under their control, and the state ideology of Pancasila was formally adopted as the PPP's sole ideological foundation.<sup>18</sup> This apparently has intensified the pressure on the teacher's party from some of its supporters to withdraw from the PPP and given rise to speculation of growth in extremists who might engage in political action outside the formal political system. Some observers see evidence already in the Tanjung Priok incident and BCA bombings.



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Sidney Jones has pointed out the ad hocish character and decentralized authority structure of mobilized, radical Muslim groups.<sup>19</sup> The New Order has been most severely shaken in the past by spectacular manifestations of largely unorganized popular opposition. Because of their unorganized, spontaneous character, these "action groups" and "movements" are relatively unpredictable and relatively immune to intelligence penetration, infiltration, cooptation, and agents provocateurs. Ben Anderson makes the point that, as spectacular manifestations of popular anger, usually in the capital of the nation, they are profoundly threatening to the regime's identification of itself with the nation. It is during the aftermath of such explosions--this is the important point--that the inner cohesion of the regime declines as subordinate elements see their chance for greater influence. Commander of the Armed Forces General Murdani's lightly veiled warning to some former high officers who have criticized New Order policies shortly after the terrorist activity mentioned above lends credibility to this possibility.<sup>20</sup>

3. Liberalization without Democratization. Additional clues about what is possible in Indonesia are suggested from the study of nations in South America where leaders are modifying military-authoritarian regimes, which became widespread in the 1960s and 1970s, to experiment with more liberal institutions and practices. The driving force for liberalization is not revolution, tradition, or commitment to democratic values, but, rather, leaders' calculation of utility, or the fact that important groups believe liberal procedures and institutions are more effective and efficient under existing conditions.<sup>21</sup> Liberalization gets placed on the political agenda because certain basic circumstances have changed which have increased the utility of liberal institutions. For example,

The agenda of politics: Liberal regimes become rational choices when the issues facing a country are diffuse and complex, requiring procedures for identifying problems, clarifying goals, and ordering priorities. Authoritarian regimes become more likely when some process has focused this agenda on a small range of crucial, basic issues and the major task concerns mobilizing energies and ensuring forceful implementation.<sup>22</sup>

Using conventional language may obscure this possibility, because we tend to consider the opposite of an authoritarian regime a democratic one, and, therefore, such change as "democratization." The problem is that democratization embraces both a process of inclusion in the political process and the establishment of an open, competitive relationship among those who are already participating. Chalmers and Robinson suggest using liberalization to denote only the second aspect of democracy, that which concerns contestation, competitiveness, and openness.

That the two processes occur independently is clear. The inclusion of substantial new segments of the population into the political process often takes place at a time when

competition is being severely restricted....But it is also true that increased competitiveness (liberalization) can take place without new inclusions.<sup>23</sup>

Perceiving liberalization without inclusion in Indonesia requires that we understand groups to be "in" the political system (e.g., professional associations affiliated with GOLKAR, labor unions affiliated with FBSI), but not competing. The New Order has transformed the relationships between the state and such groups by limiting their expressions so that they can no longer effectively compete. They are more tightly controlled or brought more closely into relationship with the state rather than being excluded from the system.

Following Chalmers and Robinson, therefore, I am suggesting that it is altogether possible that current New Order elites could find it to their calculated advantage, under present circumstances, to begin or continue to liberalize in any one or more of the following ways:

1. -formally assign responsibility for making decisions to a series of institutions operating together through some formal policymaking procedures;
2. -depend more on consensus-backed legal procedures for controlling political dissidence;
3. -bring interests of more groups into the calculus of policymaking and make their relationship to the state conscious and explicit;
4. -encourage the articulation of more points of view, injecting diverse and conflicting information into the policy process.

Some evidence that liberalization along the lines of 1, 2, and 4 has already begun is found in articles mentioned above.<sup>24</sup>

### Conclusion

I have attempted to caution against letting the durability and policy continuity of the New Order blind us to the possibilities of change. We can agree with the conclusion of Liddle "that (the) system now seems, on the one hand, internally unified and confident of its repressive capabilities and, on the other, sufficiently flexible and open so that a major change in the institutions...is unlikely," but at the same time we should remind ourselves that these characteristics are a temporal illusion. By freezing the New Order's characteristics at one point, we may forget that the historical processes that established it were by no means so synchronized. They involved a great deal of uncertainty and experimentation. Schmitter reminds us that there are limits within which the dynamic conservative properties can be sustained in the face of both secular structural change and episodic conjunctural events. Beware of a

tendency to see all forms of immobility as stability and all evidence of persistence as flexibility. And Chalmers and Robinson remind us that policy outcomes may be determined as much or more by the calculations of leaders responding to particular circumstances than by the interdependent institutional structures and ideational properties.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Benedict Anderson, "1983, Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective," Journal of Asian Studies, v. 62, p.478.
2. Ibid., p. 489.
3. Ibid., p. 490.
4. Donald K. Emmerson, "1984, Indonesia in 1983," Asian Survey, v. 24, p. 148.
5. Ibid.
6. Emmerson, "1978, The Bureaucracy in Political Context: Weakness in Strength," Political Power and Communications in Indonesia, pp. 82-136.
7. Emmerson, "1983, Understanding the New Order," Asian Survey, v. 23, pp. 1220-1241.
8. Ibid., p. 1238.
9. Emmerson, "1984, Indonesia in 1983," Asian Survey, v. 24, pp. 135-148.
10. R. William Liddle, 1984, Soeharto's Indonesia: Personal Rule and Political Institutions, pp. 6-7 (Mimeograph)
11. Ibid., p. 41.
12. Ibid., p. 25.
13. Ibid., p. 39.
14. Richard Rose, "1969, Dynamic Tendencies in the Authority of Regimes," World Politics, v. 21, p. 619.
15. Philippe C. Schmitter, "1976, Liberation by Golpe," Political Participation Under Military Regimes, pp. 98-99.
16. Michael Morfit, 1984, Pancasila: Orthodoxy and the New Order Government. (Mimeograph).

17. Ibid., P 4 Courses.
18. Far Eastern Economic Review, September 13, 1984.
19. Sidney R. Jones, "1980, It Can't Happen Here: A Post-Khomeini Look at Indonesian Islam," Asian Survey, v. 20, pp. 311-323.
20. Kompas, November 1, 1984.
21. Douglas A. Chalmers and Craig Robinson, "1982, Why Power Contenders Choose Liberalization," International Studies Quarterly, v. 26, p. 31.
22. Ibid., p. 32.
23. Ibid., p. 12.
24. Emmerson, "1983, Understanding the New Order," Asian Survey; Liddle, Op. cit.

## **PANEL II**

### **COMMENTS ON PAPERS PRESENTED ON LEADERSHIP, LEGITIMACY, AND SUCCESSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

by

**TIMOTHY W. WRIGHT**  
Intelligence Center Pacific, Hawaii

Taken together, these three papers show how, even within the essentially ethnically Malay component of ASEAN in non-communist Southeast Asia, the national idiosyncrasies of history and circumstance have created very different socio-political complexes within which the respective chiefs of state must operate. Were the reports extended to the remaining ASEAN states and Burma, it would be additionally clear how unique is every national case--despite propinquity, some shared parallels in their emergent post World War II independence, and the more or less homogeneous international image of the region, in part fostered by ASEAN's coordinated diplomatic stance.

Dr. Muego itemizes the recent governmental past in the Philippines and the related events which continue to cause increasing uncertainty despite the long incumbency and consolidation of power of President Marcos. He reviews the interplay in power elite rivalry and discusses some prominent figures whose relative influence and personal prospects in eventual leadership succession will only become apparent as a function of the timing and character of the vacancy at the top. The full range of socio-political, economic, and security variables involved and the continued capacity for the president to alter the institutional setting necessarily require generalization in scenario sketching of possible outcomes.

It is not possible to fasten on the "probable" outcome, and the observer is constrained to acknowledge the basic instability of the Philippine situation. Center stream in Philippine life is always the primacy of the elite; but leadership change in the Philippines now will be accompanied by the raising of so many old and new voices in a potentially bewildering array of tentative new alignments that it will be difficult for the elite--itself undergoing some structural and segmental transition--to commit with confidence to a course of action. In the Philippines, protracted uncertainty and the scramble for high stakes in a new situation would mean a strong chance of violence--perhaps penetrating more deeply to the grassroots level than in any previous political succession.

Dr. von der Mehden demonstrates how institutional continuity in open, democratic party competition in Malaysia makes for a pattern of structured change in the current era. The power of the incumbency is

grounded in majority control of the bases of power, but it must be defended by national performance open to scrutiny and critique by the body politic as a whole. In the near term, assessments that there will be no extra-constitutionality and no shift in majority control of the bases of power result in high probability that potential succession teams will be the products of UMNO party politics.

Turning to Indonesia, Dr. King recapitulates "New Order" leadership stability and policy continuity under Suharto and comments on Indonesia's special state-level bureaucratic and ideological constructs by reviewing comparative analyses from several sources. He records their concurrence in the consolidation and institutionalization of the Suharto regime, but adds the argument that this evident stability does not automatically ensure the future. The rise of authoritarianism and the regime's encyclopedic concern to guide thought and extend control through the several tiers of society does suggest that consensus is not spontaneous and that a long-term decline in citizen allegiance to the central government is at risk. The imbalance that can be engendered by attempting to fend against this by liberalization without democratization is effectively described. The estrangement of the Philippine populace from its leader and government despite such piecemeal attempts is a clear example. The discussion of the mature authoritarian leader's application of a measure based on its "calculation of utility" is telling.

The papers demonstrate why the chief of state's maintenance and use of power in the cases discussed are critical determinants in the succession process--but, more than that, the evolution of the government and the nation's capability to react effectively to change. What is the teleology of these power holders--nation-building? Or holding power? Goal-orientation, which changes through the leader's career as he prospers or weakens, causes calculated adjustment of the basis of power, and the selection of issues to be played to those ends. This can lead to political preoccupation with solidification of control over the state, rather than the strengthening of the state.

Thus the chiefs of state in these Southeast Asian countries have developed and pursued some shared themes in different ways. In the design and use of law, for example, President Marcos has defended every move since the declaration of martial law by constructing legal justifications and changing the basis of legality in advance via constitutional substitution, referendum, and amendment. President Suharto has prepared the way for legal encasement of broadly integrative national principles--notably Pancasila and dwi-fungsi. Prime Minister Mahathir has used parliamentary methods and the power of the incumbency to advance the norm for the traditional ruling sultans further toward simply reigning and not ruling.

The promotion and perception of national security issues has been another salient theme handled differently. In the Philippines, internal security threats were projected as the reason for imposition of a martial

law regime which rapidly changed its focus and perpetuation to the socio-developmental achievement of a "New Society." Historical experience in Indonesia led to a pervasive military intercalation with civilian government to react decisively against any vestige of communist agitation, internal disorder, or Islamic activism. While in Malaysia, the aftermath of the reduction of the Communist Party of Malaya and the ethnic tension associated with the emergency have been marked by policies of demographic reconstitution and economic development, with debates on security not a focus of domestic politics.

International statesmanship initiatives have also been developed individually. Marcos has made maximum efforts at international exposure to a world audience over the years and used these achievements to internal political advantage and to further increase his stature over would-be contenders. Suharto has maintained an unostentatious and consistent posture of international non-alignment which has earned Indonesia a recognized Third World position in these matters and allowed Suharto to distance himself from potential international incongruities which could appear discordant with the calm serenity of his internal control. Mahathir, on the other hand, has used international visibility and economic initiatives to exemplify the vitality and progressive leadership of the new Malay image he is pressing at home.

Evolution of the power elite and crafting of generational change have also been treated differentially. Suharto has developed a pervasive system of military involvement in bureaucracy and bureaucratic involvement in business. Coupled with GOLKAR, political solidarity, and multi-sectoral concurrence in state ideology, this supplies the system within which elitism flourishes. None of the leaders discussed today have advanced the theory and practice of developing a next generation of leadership as far as Prime Minister Lee of Singapore, but Suharto has created a structure likely to insure that the successor choices he makes are insured.

In Malaysia, the "2-M" leadership team of Mahathir and his deputy Musa Hitam is primarily occupied with its own fairly new attack on political and governmental requirements.

President Marcos uprooted and disenfranchised elements of the oligarchy, allowed new, personally-connected economic favorites to prosper, and elevated the armed forces leadership into new participation in the power elite. Generational succession has not, however, been planned for, and one of the most critical effects of the martial law era could prove to be elimination of the competitive avenue to development of public servants and political leaders that flourished in past cycles of elections for barrio, municipal, provincial, and national bicameral legislative positions.

And, to exemplify the disparate use of national imagery and ideology, no better case can be found than to contrast Sukarno and Suharto within Indonesia itself. Whereas Sukarno abused and distorted the

eclectic syncretism of the Javanese milieu to promote his own neo-Marxist, crypto-communist purposes and induce a continuous state of crisis as a backdrop to his central charismatic role, Suharto employed these same cultural proclivities and a Sukarno invention--Pancasila--with a different teleology: continuity and perpetuity of national control.

Paradigms for national cohesion--such as Indonesian Pancasila, Malaysian Rukunegara, and Philippine new society rhetoric--do not equate with templates for getting the nation's work done. An ideology is not an operation plan. Such themes are politically important for the central government in sustaining the status quo and supplying a vision for growth, but national survival, stability, and the perpetuation of governmental frames--with all the developmental advantages that accompany such continuity--depend on a regime leader's ability to respond effectively to new national problems. Leadership that must, or chooses to, devote preponderant attention to political maintenance cannot, or is not, focusing optimally on the planning and nation-building objectives necessary best to meet the future.

These examples show the limited value of comparing apparently similar phenomena in different countries as an avenue to prediction. All three papers correctly pay primary attention to the histories of their respective countries. Despite persistent media comparisons it is of little analytical use to raise a cautionary flag over any country as the next "Vietnam," next "Iran," or next "El Salvador."

Among the nations discussed, the greatest successional concern is registered over the Philippine case. In this regard I'd like to make an observation and express a bias.

The Philippines, I think, is facing the crisis of post-Marcos succession with schism in the body-social/body-politic equivalent to the national schism at the time of independence caused by the collaboration issue of World War II. Once again, just when cohesion of the nation's human resources is most important, there will be a great division between those who participated with Marcos and those who opposed him. Unlike during Liberation, however, when the nation counted some standouts among both guerrillas, who fought the invader in the field, and public servants, who stayed in place and walked the collaborationist tightrope, the divisiveness of the Marcos era appears to be leaving few clear standouts on either side.

When change comes, and new individuals of stature bid to take their places, their fortunes will depend on the quality of exposure they accomplish in the media, and the reception they are afforded by Philippine allies. In this regard, the ongoing relationship between the Philippines and the United States is uniquely important. Lest I be accused of crypto-colonial or neo-interventionist designs, let me express this bias by quoting an unimpeachable Philippine source.



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Apolinario Mabini was the intellectual embodiment of the Philippine Revolution. For his "intransigence" the American authorities deported him to Guam in 1901. The quote I give you, in translation, was produced after he was detained there over two years:

"I am ready to forget this personal injury, although injustices never beget peace....Nonetheless, in the belief that it is my duty, I shall be imprudent once more and recommend...the mutual reconciliation of Americans and Filipinos."

## BANQUET ADDRESS

by

### THE HONORABLE MARSHALL GREEN

Former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to see many old friends present, including fellow practitioners of diplomacy, the world's second oldest profession, one which has so much in common with the world's oldest profession, including ruinous competition these days from amateurs.

Ray imposed one condition on my address this evening: NO puns. You needn't worry about that, Ray, because I learned my lesson when I was charge d'affaires in Korea (or "charge daffers" as I was called by the Armed Forces Radio). The minute I was named charge, I commented in a cable to Washington on the unjust criticism which the Republic of Korea (the ROK as we called it) received every year in the United Nations from countries like the USSR, Bulgaria, and Algeria which criticized the lack of democracy in Korea. I expostulated in the last sentence of my cable: Let him who is without sin castigate the first ROK.

Unfortunately, the word "castigate" was corrupted in transmission....So I learned my lesson.

Now, I claim no current expertise on Southeast Asia, except in the field of demographics (where, incidentally, I learned that the Head of Family Planning in the Philippines is a woman by the name of Concepcion—which isn't as bad as it sounds because she never married and therefore her name is Miss Concepcion!).

Nor have I ever written a scholarly treatise or book on Southeast Asia, although I have toyed with the idea of writing a book on the rape of Cambodia entitled, "After Angkor, Vat?" but it always seemed to me that Henry Kissinger should have first claim on such a title.

By the way, this remark has nothing to do with the fact that I went to Yale and Henry to Harvard, because I've observed over the years that quite a few Harvard men have gone on to lead normal and useful lives.

Well now, to get down to serious business, or as John Steeves, our one-time ambassador to Afghanistan, used to say: "Let's grab the bull by the tail and look the issue square in the face."

The issue under consideration is ASEAN, an organization about which I do not claim to have much up-to-date information—certainly nothing that could match the expertise of some in this audience.

So my remarks will focus on the origins of ASEAN with which I was connected, as well as on some of the problems the ASEAN countries are likely to face in the years ahead.

The first time I ever visited Southeast Asia was in 1956 as Regional Planning Advisor for the Far East. Then and during immediately subsequent visits, nothing struck me more forcibly than the utter absurdity of trying to promote any meaningful regional cooperation in this area.

Southeast Asia consisted of thousands of far-flung islands and peninsulas, divided not only geographically but also riven with cultural differences and deep-seated animosities.

Vietnam and Laos were sharply divided politically and militarily, scenes of growing conflict engaging the great powers.

Cambodia seemed relatively calm, but it was under the thumb of that capricious autocrat, Sihanouk, who was so loathed by Thailand and Vietnam that the latter two were scarcely on speaking terms with Cambodia.

Malaysia was at odds with the Philippines and Indonesia and was soon to split with Singapore.

The most fractious element of all was Indonesia under Sukarno. He had grandiose pretensions as leader of the "new emerging forces of the world," was at odds with all his neighbors, and increasingly close to the communists, especially China.

Two of the countries of Southeast Asia seemed to have little in common with the others, namely, the Philippines, never really seen as a Southeast Asian country, and Burma, which was so isolated and non-aligned that it refused even to attend non-aligned conferences.

Relations between Southeast Asian countries and their former colonial masters were generally bad, and pre-1945 Japanese militarism and expansionism were not soon forgotten throughout Southeast Asia.

Above all, China was hated and feared because of the threat it posed as an expansionist communist power and supporter of insurgencies opposing the governments of most East Asian countries. The mere presence of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia intensified those fears. Nowadays, some of us may recall the 1950s in East Asia with a bit of nostalgia, for it was a period of marked American military and economic superiority, with hundreds of U.S. facilities and hundreds of thousands of U.S. armed forces in the West Pacific and Korea.

By contrast, Soviet power in the West Pacific was weak, and after 1957 its problems with China began to be apparent.

Yet this very preponderance of U.S. power in the West Pacific area created problems for those of us concerned with promoting regional ties.

The United States had strong connections, especially economic and military, with most of the countries of East Asia, but there were almost no connections between the countries of the area.

Washington was like the hub of a wheel with strong spokes radiating out to each of the capitals of East Asia but with no rim on that wheel.

How then was regionalism to get rolling? The problem was further compounded by the strong impression I had that the more responsible the United States was toward certain countries of Asia, the less responsible those countries felt they could afford to be to us.

Saigon was the classic example. There, as we moved into the 1960s, we had to deal with a bewildering jungle of squabbling, irresponsible politicians. Coups occurred with growing frequency in Vietnam and Laos to the point where I predicted that someday Prince Rainier's throne in Monaco would be seized by his wife and that, I hoped would be the final coup de Grace.

Another problem of regional proportions was the less than satisfying relations between our military installations and the West Pacific communities where they were located.

In 1957, when a presidential mission investigated this problem, we encountered riots in Japan over the Gerard Case, the sacking of our embassy in Taiwan over the Reynolds Case, and unpleasant scenes in the Philippines where our conspicuous base presence was a national affront.

Meanwhile, it was doubtful that we were preparing ourselves or training our Asian friends for the types of warfare they were most likely to encounter in Southeast Asia. This was the subject of a paper presented to the National Security Council in 1959 with President Eisenhower in the chair.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle of all to promoting regional cooperation in East Asia was the attitude of many of its top leaders, men like Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh, Syngman Rhee, Chiang Kai-shek, and Sukarno. These were hard-bitten militant revolutionaries and most of them were ideologues, often prone to make enemies of neighbors, with long memories of past injustices.

SEATO, John Foster Dulles's brainchild, was no answer to the question of promoting Asian regionalism. Its membership included only two Southeast Asian countries, and its very formation served to split the area more than unite it. Some even called SEATO a device to revise Western domination and colonialism.

SEATO's inadequacies as a regional organization gave rise to a series of efforts both to strengthen SEATO's non-military program as well as to set up additional, new, purely regional organizations such as ASPAC and MAPHILINDO. This caused me to observe at our 1964 chiefs-of-mission meeting that we could never hope to get Sukarno's Indonesia into regional organizations ASPAC-WARDS!

As to MAPHILINDO, I still recall a silly poem I made about this proposed grouping of Malaya, the Philippines, and Indonesia:

What a wonderful family MAPHILINDO,  
There's MA, and there's PHIL, and there's INDO,  
MA's weak but she's right,  
PHIL simply ain't bright,  
And no one can tolerate INDO.

Southeast Asian unity seemed at an all-time low when I arrived in Jakarta in June 1965. Extending for 200 feet along the street opposite our embassy was a grizzly billboard depicting Indonesians ramming a bloody bamboo pole through Malaysians, Americans, and British. On almost every telephone pole there were signs saying "Green go home," though under one of them someone had scrawled in lipstick "and take me with you." So I never lost faith.

On September 30, 1965, the communist party, silently backed by Sukarno, attempted to pull a coup which, if successful, would have made Indonesia a full-fledged communist state, but the coup was badly managed. It was quickly suppressed by the Indonesian army. This was followed by a bloody massacre of leftists with some 300,000, plus or minus 200,000, killed and the communist party decimated.

This single event, determining the fate of a country representing 56 percent of the population of the ASEAN countries and 62 percent of the ASEAN area, was undoubtedly the most important single event in paving the way for ASEAN's formation. Certainly it was the most dramatic.

Of equal importance was the emergence during the 1960s in Southeast Asia of a new generation of leaders: developers, professionals, and businessmen--people who were concerned primarily with economic growth, not with ideologies. Many of them had studied abroad, developing wider horizons and associations including some with their professional counterparts in neighboring countries. These were the modernists, the pragmatists.

It is to President Suharto's everlasting credit that he, a soldier of peasant origins, had the wisdom to rely on the advice of a group of exceptionally able economists and developers (the so called Berkeley Mafia) as well as to let each of the armed services purge its own ranks of communist elements. This avoided what could have been dangerous inter-service rivalries.

Meanwhile, there continued to be steadily improving relations between the ASEAN countries. Of course, the old RAZAK proposal for a SEA Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality was out of the question as long as the communists controlled Indochina, but there were, by 1967, some interesting evidences of low-key military cooperation between the Indonesians and Malaysians in suppressing communist insurgencies in West Borneo as well as similar, quiet, unpublicized cooperation between the Thais and Malaysians on the Kra Isthmus.

All this was going on at the moment when ASEAN was formally established in late 1967—an act for which the foreign ministries of the five ASEAN countries deserve principle credit.

ASEAN was conceived as a modest organization designed to promote economic and cultural cooperation. It stayed clear of formal involvements in political and military issues until mutual trust and cooperation were better established. It soon learned that one of its greatest purposes was to be able to deal collectively vis-a-vis the superpowers, Japan, China, and the European Community, while remaining identified with the developing world. Only through much collective action could the ASEAN countries expect to have clout.

Their greatest success in that regard has undoubtedly been in their finding an ASEAN formula for dealing with the Cambodian issue, despite some basic differences in perceptions between the ASEAN countries regarding whether China or the Soviet Union represented the primary long-term threat to the ASEAN countries.

All this and the sensible attitudes of ASEAN leaders and officials have earned ASEAN the respect of most of the world, including China.

I hesitate to offer predictions about the future of ASEAN countries, being mindful of what Sir Arthur Eddington, the British astrophysicist once said about the universe: "Somewhere, somehow, some great unknown is doing we know not what."

Not only are great unknowns involved, but what happens in certain areas remote from ASEAN, like the Mideast or Persian Gulf, can have more impact on the fate of ASEAN states than events originating in the Far East or Gulf of Tonkin.

But I will hazard four observances about the future:

- (1) As long as Washington, Tokyo, and Peking continue to have a common view of the Soviet threat, and this seems most likely, the overall strategic situation in East and Southeast Asia is likely to remain fairly stable, which augurs well for ASEAN.
- (2) No early solution to the Cambodian issue is likely. None of the forces involved has compelling reasons, on balance, to change its position; and any negotiations with Hanoi are almost certain to be long, drawn-out, frustrating affairs.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS HELD AT  
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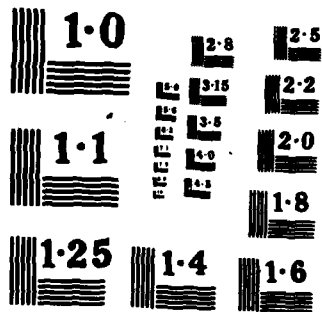
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The only thing I ever learned from months of attendance at the Paris Peace Talks in 1969 was how to argue with my wife. Now whenever we argue (which is rare), I recall all those North Vietnamese cliches, and I tell her that she is turning black into white and white into black and that I will not be taken in by such sophistry. I also tell her that unless she advances a serious and correct attitude there can be no further progress in our talks. And if she raises a valid point, I cut her off by saying that she has already made that point and has no right to raise it again.

(3) A third observation about the future of ASEAN relates to the importance of their being able to handle a range of issues likely to become more difficult in the years ahead.

I refer primarily to population growth (already Java's most serious problem), overcrowded cities, job creation, and finding markets for exports. The Philippines faces all these problems, plus a deteriorating political situation brought on in part by reactions against the Marcos regime and in part by the alarming growth of the New People's Army. The latter issues will probably be of greater concern to the United States than to the ASEAN countries.

(4) A final observation has to do with the U.S. role in East Asia over the last 40 years. Clearly the great progress evident in East Asia all the way from Korea to Papua New Guinea could not have been possible without a strong American commitment and a lot of sacrifices of American lives and treasure.

In the course of pursuing a generally enlightened policy, we have had to put up with all kinds of flak on the home front from the China Lobby, from the Vietnam War protesters, from a balky Congress and often critical press, as well as from those who insisted on making human rights our primary objective, while neglecting to place equal emphasis on human responsibilities.

Was it worth it all? Well I think so, citing our relations with the ASEAN countries as one bit of evidence as well as current pragmatic trends in China and the common security concerns of the United States, Japan, China, Korea, and most of East Asia. Trade competition is another matter which I cannot get into now.

Let me end by telling the real truth about how ASEAN was founded.

ASEAN was founded on the golf courses of Southeast Asia just as surely as the British Empire was founded on the playing fields of Eton.

For decades now, most of the leaders of Southeast Asia here had a passion for golf, with these leaders visiting each others' countries for the ostensible purpose of state affairs but, in reality, for a game of golf. Why not, then, form ASEAN and play golf more often and do it at government expense?

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Now I do not wish to trivialize this important development for I know at firsthand that President Marcos and the Tunku of Malaysia, in the course of a golf match at the Royal Selangor Course in Kuala Lumpur, reached an understanding in 1968 over Sabah that averted war over this disputed territory.

So critical was golf to the formation of ASEAN that Adam Malik, Indonesia's wily foreign minister, temporized on accepting Thanat Khoman's proposed initial meeting of ASEAN in 1967 until he could bring his golf handicap down to 30. This he achieved by going out every morning at the crack of dawn to practice at the Jakarta golf course, occasionally with me in tow.

Not that I was such a hot golfer--in fact the caddies at the Jakarta course used to call me Tuan Green (Tuan being the Indonesian word for Mr.), but by the time I left Indonesia they all called me "three on Green."

Now, if only the leaders of the Mideast played golf with each other the way they do in the Far East--not too well, mind you, but the way I play which is so character-building, how much better off the world would be.

And the Mideast starts with all the advantages of natural sand traps. All they would have to do is to connect those traps with some fairways and greens and we would have peace in our time.

If only the Ayatollah and Colonel Qaddafi played golf!! Better still, if only their parents had practiced family planning!!!

**PANEL III**

**CURRENT AND FUTURE ROLE OF THE MILITARY  
IN  
SOUTHEAST ASIA**

**Moderator: Stephen B. Young**

**PANEL III**  
**Paper One**

**THE PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM TODAY**

by

**DOUGLAS PIKE**  
University of California at Berkeley

This paper is a brief discussion of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) written for analysts interested in the geopolitics of Indochina. It is in two sections. The first sets the stage with a general description of PAVN; the second singles out five key aspects about PAVN which seem to be of central importance at this moment in Vietnam's history.

**OVERVIEW.**

The People's Army of Vietnam, formerly the army of North Vietnam and now, in effect, the army of all Indochina, is the world's third largest, outmanned only by the armed forces of China and the USSR.<sup>2</sup> In fact, if not in name, it includes the Lao People's Liberation Army and the People's Republic of Kampuchea Armed Forces, such as they are.

The history of PAVN can be described as singular, peculiar, and improbable. It was created in the last days of World War II in a mountain hideout near the China border when a 32-year-old Hanoi history teacher named Vo Nguyen Giap and 33 other middle-class Vietnamese, on the run from the French and Japanese, banded together into what they called an Armed Propaganda Team. At the time it must have seemed the sort of romantic foolishness to be expected in a colonial backwater from a clutch of Confucian academic reformers who had read a bit of Marx and Lenin. Yet, this miniscule band grew to amazing size and prowess, able to confound if not defeat three of the world's major armies and, in the process, revolutionize the conduct of warfare.

PAVN differs institutionally from other military organizations. It has the "party within," setting it apart from non-communist armed forces; and it divides itself uniquely into a troika--regular force, regional force, and self defense--distinguishing it from other communist armies.

The PAVN Regular Force, or PAVN Main Force as it is sometimes called (elsewhere it would be called the standing army), consists of these elements and strengths:

The People's Army-980,000.

The People's Navy-12,500.

The People's Air Force-15,700.

For 40 years it has grown continually. The greatest buildup came about a year after the end of the Vietnam War. PAVN infantry divisions were increased from 27 to 51 (38 regular infantry divisions and 13 smaller economic construction divisions), and military corps from six to eight. The Vietnamese Air Force was raised from three to five air divisions including one helicopter division. The Vietnamese Navy, in three years beginning in 1978, doubled the number of its combat vessels. The PAVN High Command also reconstituted the dormant 405th Airborne Brigade, indicating renewed interest in that kind of warfare. And it began experimenting with the "combined arms" concept although this format has not been employed in Cambodia.

PAVN also consists of an additional complicated military apparatus, here termed the Paramilitary Force. It is an armed force often dismissed by outsiders in writing about Vietnamese military affairs. Yet it is enormously important both in socio-psychological and purely military terms.

Hanoi divides this force into two categories. The first is the People's Regional Force of about 500,000, consisting chiefly of infantry companies, lightly armed with limited mobility, organized and operating geographically. Elsewhere, it would be called the national guard or the standing guard. The second is the People's Self-Defense Force, made up of three major elements: the urban People's Self-Defense Force and the rural People's Militia, together totaling about one million members; and the 1.54 million-person Armed Youth Assault Force in the South. The People's Self-Defense Force is a reserve military force organized by social or economic groups, such as the commune, factory, or other work site; elsewhere, it would be termed the militia reserve force.

The Regional Force operates mostly at the province level, organized on the basis of one regiment per province, although there are some Regional Force divisions in provinces along the China border. Its basic operational unit is the company, which is expected to operate as a self-contained, in-place home guard, defending its own territory if it can or with PAVN help if it cannot. Although on full-time duty, Regional Force members also have production responsibilities, chiefly raising food crops.

The Self Defense Force/Militia consists of a large variety of "troops" including militia, mobile militia, self-defense troops, village troops and, in the South, Youth Assault and Armed Youth Assault troops. These are part-time military, organized by company, stationed in villages or urban centers (averaging about 2,000 per district), reporting to a district level headquarters commanded by a PAVN senior captain or major with a staff of about 10, usually overaged PAVN supernumeraries.

In the late 1970s, a new kind of "super paramilitary force" appeared in parts of Vietnam called the People's Guerrilla Force, or in everyday parlance "village troops." These units are organized like other

paramilitary elements, but are better trained, better equipped, and provided with their own transportation. They are found in the villages of the North along the China border, on major islands off the Vietnam coast, and in the larger cities of the South. Their mission seems to be to maintain internal security and, in the event of an invasion, to impede enemy advance through the use of static defense measures.

Backing up the Paramilitary Force is an element of perhaps 500,000 men called the Tactical Rear Force, a semi-mobilized reserve composed mainly of veterans or overaged males. In time of emergency, this force would be mobilized and would replace personnel in the Paramilitary Force, as replacements for the PAVN Regular Force.

The military significance of the Paramilitary Force is difficult to ascertain. In an age of warfare conducted with massive firepower and lightning mobility, its utility would seem marginal. Still, it has proved valuable both during the 1979 Chinese attack and in the war in Cambodia. In any event, it is highly important to Hanoi in terms of engendering commitment to the cause.

#### PAVN Capability

Clearly PAVN is formidable. Its soldiers have considerable battle experience, the result of the Vietnam War and recent combat in Cambodia. It dwarfs the armed forces of Vietnam's neighbors to the southeast. Quite probably it could defeat any combination of ASEAN armies, and it is sufficiently powerful that, with the advantages of terrain, it could battle a Chinese army to stalemate for a prolonged period, although not indefinitely.

However, PAVN's prowess can easily be overstated for there are technical limitations present, together with certain political-diplomatic prohibitions. PAVN's composition—large numbers of infantry, many with only guerrilla war experience; limited air power; and little offensive naval capability—means that Vietnam is unable to project force over long distances into Southeast Asia. It is not a credible threat to Indonesia, for example. It probably could not even defend its own Paracel and Spratley archipelago islands against amphibious Chinese assault. In strict geopolitical terms, PAVN is not as threatening as its size suggests. (This does not apply to Thailand; the Thai army is small and designed to deal with internal insurgencies and simply no match for PAVN.)

#### Strategic Thinking

In its first decade of life, the 1930s, the Indochina Communist Party, as it was then called, had no army, only an internal security element. However, party theoreticians during this time did a great deal of thinking about military doctrine, the use of force in general, and the kind of army that eventually would be needed. Out of this examination emerged the basic notion of dau tranh, which translates as "struggle," although the original in Vietnamese is much more powerful and emotive

than its English equivalent. Ho Chi Minh and General Vo Nguyen Giap created a military strategy out of the notion of dau tranh.<sup>3</sup> Two types were developed: armed dau tranh (armed struggle) and political dau tranh (political struggle). Armed dau tranh roughly means military activity, although it includes actions normally not associated with an armed force, such as kidnapping and assassination. Political dau tranh, in effect, is politics with guns and includes actions in a military context involving social organization—mobilization of personnel and civilians alike to support the cause. Political dau tranh, in operational terms, consists of three van or action programs, making up the doctrinal trinity of organization, mobilization, and motivation. The strategic concept envisions the two forms of dau tranh as twin pincers closing on the enemy. Another metaphor used is hammer and anvil.<sup>4</sup>

Vietnamese communist military doctrine places great emphasis on the notion of people as weapons of war, the correct meaning of the term "people's war." It also seeks to gear military action to international developments, and it attempts to harness the force of nationalism, linking it to the appeals of socialism and communism. Finally, it holds that passivity is the great enemy, that the true believers always must demonstrate an aggressive mentality, with constant offensive action, even if those actions are, of themselves, insignificant.

World War II became the great moment of opportunity for army building by the Vietnamese communists. They formed a united front organization called the Viet Minh and helped organize a collection of guerrilla bands loosely called the Viet Minh Army. During the war, these guerrilla bands, many led by Vietnamese communist cadres, harassed the Japanese occupying Indochina, spied for the Allies, rescued downed American airmen, and generally served the Allied cause. Also during the war, the Vietnamese communists were busy developing their own separate parallel military establishment. In the mountains of Cao Bang Province along the Chinese border of northern Vietnam, General Giap and a handful of cadres worked out the structure for a new type of military unit. For two years, from 1942 to 1944, they perfected, tested, and finally revealed their creation: the Armed Propaganda Team. The date of its formation, December 22, 1944, now marks PAVN's formal birth date.

The armed propaganda team concept should be more widely understood and appreciated than is the case, for it is a remarkable device. It is well named—if one accepts the term "propaganda" in its proper Leninist meaning, and not as used in the West to mean dissemination of repetitious, hackneyed ideas. Teams were armed, but only for defensive purposes or for some occasional spectacular military gesture to advertise their cause, not to intimidate villagers, for this would have been self-defeating. The teams went into the villages of Vietnam to organize and mobilize the people. This was no easy task, since villagers often were suspicious and distrustful. Only skilled cadres could break the communicational ice. The armed propaganda team idea served the Vietnamese Communist Party cause well in the Viet Minh War. It was the initial institutional weapon in South Vietnam much later with the

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formation of the People's Liberation Armed Force (PLAF) of the National Liberation Front, or Viet Cong. Now the armed propaganda team has been introduced into Cambodia.

PAVN's first regular units appeared in September 1950, and consisted of about 29 infantry battalions and 8 heavy weapons battalions. In September 1951, the first full PAVN infantry division, known as the Vanguard Division, went into action. A year later, PAVN heavy artillery began to appear frequently on the battlefield. The war dragged on for several years until its culmination at Dien Bien Phu which resulted in a PAVN victory and the Geneva talks, where the two sides wrote an end to French colonialism in Indochina.

When the Viet Minh War ended, PAVN was still a united front military force. For instance, catholic battalions were operating in the South under the Viet Minh banner. But the basic structure of PAVN as a national armed force for North Vietnam had been established and, gradually over the next few years, it became less and less of a united front army and more of a party-controlled army. A program to develop and enlarge PAVN began, one that continues to this very day: PAVN, by 1955, had about 200,000 men; by 1965, 400,000; by 1975, 650,000; and, today, at least three million are under arms, making PAVN the largest army, per capita, of any country in the world.

With the communist party's 1959 decision to begin armed dau tranh in South Vietnam, the National Liberation Front was created along with its People's Liberation Army (PLA), later the People's Liberation Armed Force (PLAF). In the early years of the Vietnam War, the burden of combat was on PLAF, not on PAVN. Because of attrition, buildup of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), and arriving American and other Allied troops, the balance of forces began to tip away from PLAF, at which point Hanoi began to dispatch PAVN units to the South. The first of these went as "filler packets" into the PLAF units. Then came small PAVN units, finally whole divisions. By the 1972 Easter offensive, about 90 percent of the day-to-day combat in the South was by PAVN, that is, North Vietnamese regulars in uniform operating in the South. The toll on PAVN/PLAF for this Vietnam War was extraordinarily high; the estimated number of dead ranges from about 650,000 to nearly one million.

PAVN's mission today<sup>5</sup> is seen as threefold: to defend Vietnam, the basic duty of every army in every society; to ensure continuation of Vietnam's present socio-political system; and to contribute to the restructuring of society.<sup>6</sup> In the North this third task means the never-ending effort to create a classless society. In the South, it means helping to "break the machine" of the southern social structure. PAVN also has purely economic duties: the production of goods and, generally, helping solve the country's many economic problems. To some extent, the nation-building task was shunted aside in the last few years because PAVN was preoccupied with its war in Cambodia and preparing to defend the country against China. Presumably, it will return to this economic duty when it is able.



## II

We now turn to an examination of five key characteristics of PAVN which I regard as being of critical importance. They represent the operative factors in what are probably the five most crucial sectors or ongoing developments within Vietnam that, taken collectively, will largely be decisive in determining Vietnam's future for the next ten years or so.<sup>7</sup>

The five characteristics are:

--The kind of PAVN officer corps now being created, the result of new officer selection patterns and changed officer training programs.

--The nature of the new relationship between PAVN and party, particularly at the highest levels of leadership.

--The rise of PAVN's ubiquitous influence, both indirect and direct, on the Vietnamese society which is changing the nature of that society.

--Changes in PAVN's official doctrine and military thinking caused by the Cambodia experience and the brief war with China.

--Alterations within PAVN stemming from increased logistic dependency on the USSR and general growing Moscow influence over PAVN in military science.

### New Officer Profile

In its original form, which extended well into the Vietnam War, PAVN was a singular military entity, best illustrated by the fact that not until the mid-1970s did it develop a true officer corps, as that term is defined by armies elsewhere.

Officers were not so named, but were called military cadres, just as non-commissioned officers and enlisted men were called combatants. Rank, insignae, and distinguishing paraphernalia were eschewed unless the officer went abroad on assignment. This was in keeping with egalitarian notions in PAVN, the sense being it was not a separate military entity but "of the people." It was reinforced by the fact that what was needed in a military officer was political not technical military skill. Indeed, what was important in those early years was an officer's ability to mobilize and motivate, that is an aptitude for political dau tranh's three van (or action) programs. Skill in battle counted for far less. Obviously, this deeply affected the kind of individuals selected as officers and largely determined their career success.<sup>8</sup>

The contradictions inherent here inevitably, considering the factionalism that is natural to Vietnamese socio-political activity, gave rise to the great debate, the "Red" versus "Expert" (or "Hong" vs.

"Chuyen") argument. It asked, which is more important in warfare, man or material? Specifically, it argued whether, in producing a superior fighting man, ideological motivation or military technology was of greater importance. Within the ranks of PAVN this quarrel was reduced to the persons of the two chief officer figures, the political commissar<sup>9</sup> and the military commander, who shared command authority. As in China, the debate and power struggle raged for years. Now it has largely been resolved, against the ideologues.

Actually, what is involved here is military professionalism and the growing realization within PAVN that in a modern army the effective fighting man is a professional, and that as a professional he must have been both spirit and know-how. Thus PAVN, in embracing professionalism, is simply moving away from its singular nature towards military orthodoxy. The advent of the "single commander" concept (to the detriment of the geopolitical commissar), the appearance of rank, colorful uniforms, the clear separation of services (and now service rivalry), all testify to the fact that PAVN is moving toward orthodoxy. Soviet influences accelerate the trend.

Of course, this affects the kind of individuals selected as officers --being judged more as technocrats than political manipulators--and the kind of military training they receive. And it changes career patterns, promotions, and assignments.

All of this is a new phenomenon. The change brought by the advent of a new officer profile in any army makes itself felt only slowly. But this much is already clear, as the years go on, PAVN, increasingly, can be treated and analyzed as a modern, standard army.

#### Party versus PAVN

Lenin and the early Bolsheviks had a deep fear that the Russian Revolution might fall victim to its own military forces, as had the French Revolution. They always warned against the rise of a "Red Napoleon." Lenin coined the slogan, "The Party Controls the Gun." This fear of the military reached pathological proportions in the 1930s when Joseph Stalin executed virtually the entire Red Army senior officer corps. The Vietnamese Communist Party's view of its military never has reached such an extreme, but it always has been wary of the military and consistently has sought to politicize PAVN as a means of keeping it linked to the party.

The Party apparatus within PAVN is like a thin pyramid inside a broad based pyramid. Party military policy is determined in Hanoi and implemented through descending echelons of central committees down to the individual in the basic unit. This means that socio-political control is in the hands of the party cadres. In the society at large, the party monopolizes political power, and political activity by the ordinary Vietnamese is only participatory; within PAVN, this has less meaning than in the civilian society.

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All political activity, since Vietnam's heritage is Sinic based, involves factionalism. Political infighting within the party, especially at the upper levels, consists of "faction bashing" (or bung di). A form of this political struggle goes on within PAVN, at the high command and upper cadre level.

The arena for this is a complex matrix of state and party elements so dense as to indicate that by standards used to judge military establishments elsewhere, PAVN is vastly organized. There is a good deal of overlap between the PAVN high command and top party posts within the politburo. There is also considerable dual functioning or "wearing of two hats" by single military figures.<sup>10</sup>

Actual authority is vested in a half dozen individuals, almost all of whom hold several state and party positions simultaneously. PAVN probably is controlled by fewer individuals upon whom rest fewer controls than any comparable armed force anywhere. There is thus no true hierarchy or chain of command, or even a superior-subordinate arrangement at the upper level. Rather there are various sets of organizational boxes occupied by the same few individuals and organized in this fashion simply for purposes of division of labor.

All major decisions within the Vietnamese political system are made by the 15 men of the politburo. This is a political arrangement unique among ruling systems of the world. Of no other country can it be said that so much political power is held in so few hands. In Hanoi, there is no outside institutional challenge to politburo authority, as in the USSR; no outside geographic challenge, as has developed in the Chinese communist system. Some of these 15 politburo members are military and count among the most influential. Thus, decision-making is concentrated in a civilian structure, but with strong armed forces representation.

The influence of the PAVN generals on defense matters, that relate more or less exclusively to PAVN internally, is virtually unquestioned. It is effected through the political generals on the politburo and comes down to: what PAVN wants, PAVN gets.

This is not to say there is not sharp debate at the politburo level, nor that there is little to dispute. Indeed, if one reads between the lines of the army newspaper, Quan Doi Nhan Dan, it is clear there are differences within the PAVN general officer corps, and between the party and PAVN at the highest level of leadership, over a variety of matters: how best to meet the China threat, what sort of strategy to employ against protracted conflict in Cambodia, and how "Sovietized" should PAVN become. These issues sprawl across what is pure PAVN interest, hence there is less deference by the party than is the case with exclusively internal PAVN matters. There are also indications, mostly via the diplomatic cocktail circuit in Hanoi, that some PAVN generals have a jaundiced view of the party's ability to solve the country's many pressing economic problems, and the implication the military could run the economy better than the party.

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These and other recent indications out of Hanoi suggest the possibility of the eventual emergence of politburo factionalism that starkly divides military from civilian. Triggered by professional or career interests or an issue such as allocation of resources could cause the military members to act as a single bloc against a "civilian" position. At the moment, all we can be certain of is that the pulling and hauling are there along with tensions, and that these continue to grow. As PAVN becomes ever more "professional," the gap between party and PAVN will steadily widen. This is not to suggest that the two are on an inevitable collision course—only to say that what was once a monolithic one is now two.

#### Martialization of Vietnam

Military-civilian relations in Vietnam are both complex and contradictory. The complexity stems from the fact that PAVN is so highly integrated into the Vietnamese society. While monolithism may be eroding at the politburo level because of growing civilian vs. military conflict of interests, it remains remarkably strong at the general public level. Within the Vietnamese society, it cannot be said that at some point "civilian" ends and "military" begins. This is the heritage, the party is distinct from the state but PAVN transcends both. There is no such thing in Vietnam as the "civilian mind" in opposition to the "military mind." Indeed if "mind" does exist in this sense, it is a single one and closer to what elsewhere is labeled the military mind.

One of PAVN's enunciated duties is to serve as moral model. It is charged with the task of communicating a value system to the society. In the North, this has always taken the form of the eternal drive to establish a classless society, rooting out the remnants of class structure which seem to endure regardless of effort. In the South, PAVN is to help "break the machine" of the southern society which means replacing the former social system with an egalitarian, classless structure. The current ethical problem for PAVN in this respect is moral corruption. It has always plagued both the society and PAVN, although earlier outsiders' impressions were that PAVN was less susceptible to such blandishments, and thus less corrupt than the general society. Now the two are found equally guilty. Hence, as temptations of corruption spread and intensify, PAVN increasingly is seen as a practitioner of wrongdoing rather than as a model of propriety for society to emulate.

The fact of high PAVN integration into the society imposes on the military a multi-faceted role which, in turn, gives rise to certain contradictions and cross purposes. At times, PAVN seems to be confused about its identity, like an actor switching too rapidly from one role to another. PAVN is expected to be all things to all people and special things to the party. It finds itself attempting both to serve and to lead the people often under a political line laid down by the party that is contradictory to one or both of these efforts.

The net effect of PAVN's profound martial influence on the civilian Vietnamese society has been extraordinary. It has resulted in a praetorian social system that is unique in the world, a sort of modern-day Sparta. Vietnam may not be made up of goose-stepping Junkers, but it is nonetheless infused with praetorian values, marked by martial behavior and characterized by military ways of doing things. This is not militarism in the usual sense of the word; perhaps a better term would be "veteranization" of Vietnam.<sup>12</sup>

It has now become a function of simple demographics. The society is steadily being filled with ex-servicemen even as PAVN itself continues to grow. A safe estimate is that one out of every two males encountered in Hanoi today is a veteran. A society composed chiefly of individuals with long military experience cannot help but take on certain martial characteristics, although not necessarily bellicose or militaristic ones.

The fact of this phenomenon is clear although its import is not. In any event, it seems inevitable that PAVN will continue to play a central role in Vietnam regardless of changes of government, including generational transfer of power.

#### Re-thinking Strategy

The history of Vietnam since 1975 has been the history of monumental failure, one traceable to an overconfidence born of victory in war.

The Hanoi politburo thought the problem with Cambodia could be solved with a quick military fix. They believed a militant "high" posture toward China would properly realign postwar Sino-Vietnamese relations. They thought the best way to handle Thailand/ASEAN was with intimidating ultimata. Each judgment proved wrong. All have extracted a high price in suffering from the Vietnamese people.

Have the decision-makers, these 15 men of the politburo, learned from their mistakes? Are they even fully cognizant that they erred? Probably not, their leadership system being what it is: aged, anachronistic, and insulated from criticism.<sup>13</sup>

The men of the politburo are warriors all. And everything they have ever achieved has been by way of the fruits of battle. They know only one approach in problem solving, the maximum application of force. For them, power is the barrel of a gun and their faith in this is undiminished. As long as they remain in control, there is little prospect of new policies or altered approach by Hanoi. This may not be long coming, since their average age is 72.

The strategic thinking of the politburo and its high command, as well as the military capability of PAVN itself, has been tested twice since the end of the Vietnam War--in Cambodia and against China. In both

instances, the strategic thinking of the Hanoi leadership was less than adequate, and the performance by PAVN barely adequate.

The doctrinal challenge with respect to Cambodia was how to solve the "Pol Pot problem" as it was expressed by the Hanoi press when it emerged in 1975. Various solutions were tried--diplomacy, psychological warfare, and attempting to assassinate Pol Pot. In 1977, it appeared the high command had settled on the old slow but sure dau tranh strategy. Then, at the end of 1978, came Soviet (or Western) style strategy, high-visibility invasion: tank-led infantry plunging across the border, fanning out and occupying the country in a matter of days. Pol Pot and his followers fled to the Cardomom Mountains and began a resistance movement, soon joined by non-communists and supported logistically by China with its strategic doctrine of "bleeding" Vietnam until it withdraws.

For the first time, PAVN generals have employed Western/Soviet military strategy rather than their more familiar traditional strategy. It became apparent early that they lacked skill in conducting this kind of warfare. Their initial thinking apparently was that a quick victory was possible, in less than six months. This was based on the calculation that Pol Pot had neither military staying power nor political depth, and on the assumption that once a traumatic military assault has shattered his capability to resist, the Khmer people would flock to the flag of the newly formed People's Republic of Kampuchea under Heng Samrin. But Pol Pot is something of a guerrilla war genius. And he has hidden appeal. He was able to convert the blitzkrieg war into a protracted conflict, chiefly by embracing PAVN's old dau tranh strategy and turning it back on the invaders.

It is clear, in retrospect, that, for Hanoi's leaders, the whole PAVN enterprise in Cambodia was a misbegotten disaster from the start. Their assumptions proved to be wrong, their strategy did not work.

By all evidence, however, they intend to press on with the war. What has changed recently is the tactical approach. PAVN generals are attempting to reduce the cost and strain involved. They seek to "Khmerize" the war by passing more of the combat burden over to the People's Republic of Kampuchea Armed Forces (PRKAF). And they hunt for a cheaper kind of counter-insurgency, one that will reduce the casualties inflicted on the 150,000-man army in the field. PAVN generals now order greater use of long range artillery and air strikes. They substitute mechanized warfare for costly ground sweeps and combat in difficult terrain. But this approach tends to be self-defeating, for it permits continued insurgent existence and gives the guerrillas time and space. There is a rule at work in insurgencies: if guerrillas don't lose, they win. The Cambodian insurgents today are stronger than when they began in 1979. They are not powerful enough to defeat PAVN, but have such prowess as to make the price of their destruction more costly than PAVN generals, at this moment, are willing to pay.

At times, Hanoi has shown signs of faltering, indicated by signals of interest in an outcome in Cambodia other than a simple military solution. Some observers believe these are mere tactical maneuvers. To date, all have come to naught.

As far as can be seen ahead in Cambodia--which is not more than a year at the most--Hanoi will press on and probably will achieve nothing decisive. If there is a major change in war policy, it is more likely to result from developments within the leadership in Hanoi than from developments on the battlefield.

Dealing with China is, for Vietnam's generals as well as for its diplomats, a matter of narrow options. Hanoi's behavior, by necessity, must largely turn on Chinese behavior--that is: China acts, Vietnam reacts. The PAVN high command appears to believe, rightly or wrongly, that the Chinese army will not come again--in part because Hanoi will avoid provoking Peking and in part because Hanoi thinks the Chinese have no stomach for another battle.

China's attack caught the Hanoi high command off-guard--apparently the Vietnamese simply couldn't believe it would ever come to Chinese invasion. The high command appears to assess the 17-day war as indecisive in strategic terms. It was over before PAVN could invent and implement a counter strategy. The Chinese objective was limited; its armies moved through the mountains, stopped just short of the plain leading to Hanoi, then withdrew. There was no use of air power by either side. Vietnam's response was improvisation, using economic construction divisions who happened to be in the area, greatly aided by favorable mountain terrain. The Chinese assault did not go well, chiefly because of logistic and transportation problems. It is probably safe to conclude that this brief war was a military failure but a political victory for China. Basic PAVN strategy, should there be another Chinese invasion, can be inferred from ongoing research and development work and from PAVN reorganization activities since 1979. It is clear that the Hanoi high command's basic intent will be to hold the mountains and make the Chinese advance so costly as to become impractical. Refined and concentrated mobilization programs have been implemented in the districts of the region. The idea appears to be to present the incoming Chinese with tier after tier of self-contained, paramilitary-manned districts, themselves part of the "iron fortress" provinces that face China. This is a revised reapplication of the dau tranh strategy. The Chinese are to be met with a combination of high technology modern warfare (particularly much big artillery) and old-fashioned guerrilla war.

It seems self-evident in the long run that Vietnam will achieve some sort of modus vivendi with China. The Vietnamese realize China is too large and too near to permit a condition of permanent hostility. The present confrontation resulted primarily from blundering and poor judgment, and Hanoi's problem now is how to rectify this condition without appearing to capitulate to the Chinese. Eventually there will be a Sino-Vietnamese rapprochement of some sort, although it could take a decade.

### Soviet Influence

The central fact of life for the Vietnamese, with respect to external relations in general, is the Sino-Soviet dispute. It colors all thinking and influences all of Vietnam's foreign policies. The close present relationship between Hanoi and Moscow should be viewed through this prism.<sup>14</sup>

China represents a threat to Vietnam. The USSR represents valuable assistance in meeting this threat, requiring an intimate relationship. However, the China threat persists, in no small measure because of the close Hanoi-Moscow association.

The Hanoi-Moscow relation, a military alliance in all but name, was never intended by either. It resulted, on Vietnam's part, in response to earlier failed policies which threw it into a dependency on the Soviets for food and military hardware; and, on the USSR's part, as a result of Kremlin penchant for opportunism, the perceived advantage of Soviet naval and air presence on the Indochinese peninsula.

The Vietnamese do not like to be dependent on the USSR, nor do they particularly like the Russians. But there is little they would want to do about the association until they can get on their feet economically and until the China threat subsides. Even then, there would be less chance of a breach of relations than of arranging a more normal orthodox association.

China's attack and the subsequent quagmire in Cambodia forced the PAVN logistic system to depend almost entirely on the USSR. There are no arms factories in Vietnam and all military hardware must be imported. Vietnam is also dependent now on the Soviet Union for various vital commodities such as oil, spare parts for the transportation system, and chemical fertilizer. These the USSR has supplied rather generously. Serving the national objective of maintaining close relations with the USSR is endorsed quite obviously by PAVN's generals. They, even more than the rest of the leadership, probably recognized the imperative nature of Moscow as an assured source of military hardware and of psychological support against the China threat.

Vietnam's neighbors to the southeast and others express the fear that Vietnam's dependency will turn PAVN into a surrogate threat which will rage through the region doing every Moscow bidding, a fear that appears exaggerated. The Vietnamese may be dependent, but there is no evidence that Moscow has ever been able to convert this dependency into a lever powerful enough to force the Vietnamese to do anything the Vietnamese do not want to do. What might be called puppet control to advance Soviet interest is beyond the realm of reality.<sup>15</sup>

Profound influence is being effected by the USSR on PAVN, but it is subtle and more pernicious.<sup>16</sup> It stems from the basic fact that with



any modern army, he who controls the kind of weapons supplied, the logistics made available or denied, and the sort of training provided, can largely dictate what that army becomes, its strategic thinking and the kind of wars it can fight and not fight. An analysis of the military aid shipments by Moscow to PAVN over the past ten years offers clues to what appears to be a Soviet plan for PAVN development.

In the first year or so after the end of the Vietnam War, Soviet military aid was the nominal palace-guard type, designed to help keep the regime in power and its generals happy. The Cambodian invasion, which Moscow either helped plan or knew of in advance, levied the demand for guerrilla-bashing hardware such as helicopters, armored vehicles, and field communications systems. After the Chinese attack, there was a shift to the kind of military hardware needed to fight a conventional, limited war, such as complex air missile defense systems, advanced aircraft, modern naval vessels, and technical installations at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang.

Now the aid has reached the level of integrated or combined military planning, indicating Vietnamese commitment to some sort of coordinated military planning, obviously directed at China. The presumption is a division of labor between Vietnam and the USSR in the event of war with China. Arms shipments, therefore, are designed to complement, not duplicate, this military preparedness. That, in turn, implies an over-arching Moscow-Hanoi defense plan.

There is reason to believe some dissatisfaction exists in the Kremlin about the cost-benefit ratio of the present Soviet-Vietnamese relationship. Soviet admirals probably would not concur, although how much actual value Cam Ranh Bay is to them can be debated. Some Soviet leaders appear to believe the USSR has gotten the worst of its bargain with Hanoi. Moscow's response, however, is not to scrap the relationship, but to rationalize it, and make it more equitable for the USSR. Several far reaching measures have been taken in the past two years with this in mind, for instance, passing certain defense burdens over to PAVN and, on the civilian side, changes in the import-export system.

Exactly how important strategically Vietnam is to the USSR can be, and is, a matter for debate. But clearly there is advantage here for Moscow and no good reason why it should abandon its present alliance, especially if it can be made more cost effective. The USSR has a vested interest in seeing that PAVN's present preeminence does not change. Indeed, the basis of its presence in Indochina and its foothold in Southeast Asia, which this provides, rest on the continued need by PAVN for Soviet assistance and alliance. A PAVN hostile to China also serves as a useful flanking threat for the USSR.

The prognosis, then, is that, for the near future, Vietnam will remain in intimate embrace with the USSR. It may well be we have witnessed the limits of intimacy in the relationship and that the most likely prospect is for a "distancing" process to begin. There is little

reason to believe that fundamental nature of the relationship will change, unless there is significant change in the association between the USSR and China.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. There are no full length studies of PAVN that the author is aware of; he has in preparation such a work, titled PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam, which is scheduled for publication by Janes/Presidio in September 1985. Materials used in the course of the preparation of this chapter consisted primarily of those from the Indochina Archive at the University of California (Berkeley), particularly the file marked DRV/SRV - Armed Forces, approximately 75,000 pages of documentation. Published works consulted included the writing of General Vo Nguyen Giap, principally Big Victory, Great Task, The Military Art of People's War, and Arm the Revolutionary Masses; General Van Tien Dung's Our Great Spring Victory; General Tran Van Tra's Vietnam: History of the Bulwark B2 Theater, v. 5: Concluding the 30-Years War, JPRS 82783, February 2, 1983 (Southeast Asia Report No. 1247); and Vietnam: The Anti-U.S. Resistance War for National Salvation 1954-1975: Military Events produced by PAVN Publishing House (Hanoi) in 1980 and translated by JPRS 80968, June 3, 1982.
2. Jane's Fighting Forces of the World, 1984.
3. Outlined most clearly in General Giap's Big Victory, Great Task.
4. As a concept, this kind of war was largely unknown in America and the description here may strike the reader as esoteric abstraction, due to lack of familiarity. The concept is real, vital, and entirely familiar to every Vietnamese communist cadre, as well as to serious American students of the Vietnam War.
5. In the last ten years there has been a flood of material out of Hanoi dealing with all phases of the early history of North Vietnam, the Vietnamese communist movement, and the war. See particularly the party journal Tap Chi Cong San, almost every issue of which contains articles that acknowledge what once was denied in communist circles and debated outside of them concerning the conduct of the war, foreign relations, and the nature of the North Vietnamese armed forces.
6. The unity of Indochina represents still another factor at work in determining Hanoi's defense policies and objectives. There seem little doubt that all top military and party leaders accept the idea that the proper political configuration for the Indochina peninsula

is a Federation of Indochina, to include Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. In the early years this was a stated goal, one North Vietnam long pursued. Indeed, one of the reasons for the present hostility with Cambodia is that the Indochina federation idea triggered fear and anxiety within the Khmer Rouge and turned Pol Pot, as early as 1970, to a confrontational stance. Vietnam can be counted on to pursue this goal although not necessarily by military means.

7. Vietnam's basic internal condition is grim--a compound of social malaise, economic stagnation, and failed leadership. The overriding problem in the country is socio-economic decline that set in about a year after the end of the Vietnam War and has gotten steadily worse. The essential reason for this economic failure--which is important to understand since in the cause lies suggested remedy--is the inability of the ruling politburo to make the right decisions and implement the correct policies.
8. The prospect for the future is growth and intensification of intra-service rivalries manifested by competition in the allocation of resources, particularly manpower, as well as by rivalry at the ego level among senior officers. There is no reason to believe, however, that such rivalry will become extreme or prove to be destructive for PAVN.
9. Although there now is only the "single commander" system, which means a more orthodox military chain of command, the political commissar remains. The political commissar has no counterpart in non-communist armies. In them, some of his functions are performed by the chaplain, some by the troop information and education or the troop special services officer. But none of these has the authority of a political commissar. Politics generally are avoided in non-communist armies, while in communist forces politics represent an entire added dimension of activity. At his best, the political commissar is enormously effective, often a legendary figure consistently able to rouse spirits and to personalize the impersonal party apparatus.
10. For instance, the top defense position on the state side is the post of minister of defense. This is held by General Van Tien Dung. The top defense position of the party side is in what is called the Central Party Military Committee, also chaired by General Dung. And finally, the top operational post within PAVN, commander-in-chief, is a post also held by General Dung.
11. It is difficult to separate the communist party influence from PAVN influence in this respect. Even with PAVN there are differing factors that involve political generals and professional generals. Most of what the world hears, in the form of official pronouncements, comes from the political generals.

12. See the author's "The Veteran in Vietnam," a paper presented at the 29th annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, New York City, March 27, 1977.
13. They are implacably determined, some would say fanatic, but are exactly the leaders needed for a long war against a formidable foe. However, they have the wrong mind-set to run a country at peace, and they have proved to be totally unequal to Vietnam's needs in the past eight years. Peace requires different kinds of thinking about different kinds of problems. This politburo, in dealing with Pol Pot, China, economic development, ethnic Chinese in Vietnam, ASEAN, and the United States, made one bad decision after another and, when its mistakes became evident, piled new bad decisions atop the old, thereby compounding the error.
14. The discussion in this section is largely drawn from the author's forthcoming book, Vietnam and the Soviet Union: A Study of Geo-Political Relations, a history of the relationship from the earliest days to the present. Early writers on the subject include Robert Scalapino, William Griffith, Charles B. McLane, Richard Thornton, Donald Zagoria, and Alan Cameron. Recent younger writers who are now producing studies and are to be commended include Robert Nelson Boudreau and Leif Rosenberger. See also the writings of German scholar Dieter Heinzig. Soviet writer G. I. Chufrin of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow has done some work on Soviet-Vietnamese relations. See also The Comintern and the East, edited by R. A. Ulyanovksy, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, for an early account of relations.
15. For discussion of the psychological level of the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship, see the author's monograph The USSR and Vietnam, May 1980, published by the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, May 1980.
16. See Tap Chi Cong San (Hanoi), November 1982 in Translations on Vietnam by the JPRS, No. 82610, January 10, 1983, for two articles dealing typically with the official view of the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship. They are "Sixty-Five Years of Scientific and Technical Development of the USSR," by Professor Dang Huu and remarks by Soviet Ambassador to Hanoi, B.N. Chaplin, on the SRV national day anniversary ceremonies which sets forth the official public Moscow viewpoint.

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PANEL III  
Paper Two

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN BURMESE POLITICS

by

DAVID L. STEINBERG  
U.S. Agency for International Development

Introduction

Burma is a single-party, military-mobilization state in which all the organs of central and local authority are either vested in the military leadership or under its control. There are no independent legislative and judicial functions. The military has attempted to co-opt or create mass political, class, and occupational organizations subservient to it. Burma is a nation in which upward mobility is now increasingly restricted to military channels, and the previous civilian elites have been prevented from becoming active except with the explicit permission and guidance of the military.

The Burmese military, however, now dominates behind a longyi (Burman sarong) screen, operating in mufti but without relinquishing their power or diluting the nature of their authority. General Ne Win--coup leader, former head of state and still chairman of the only legal political party--may be known in the controlled press by the Burmese title of U ("uncle," a general term of respect), but his enduring appellation is "Bogyoke" ("generalissimo"), and the source of his power is never misunderstood. Today the Burman military are Burmese politics. ("Burman" refers to those of the major ethno-linguistic group who speak Burmese as their primary language, are almost universally Buddhist, and wear the dress associated with that group. They make up, perhaps, two-thirds of the population. The term "Burmese" refers to any citizen of Burma.)

Burma seems similar to the many states where military rulers seized power, solidified their control, and then eventually developed the political mechanisms and the ideological base through which to legitimate their rule and sanctify their authority. There are, however, significant differences in their historical antecedents, speed of consolidation of control, and accomplishments.

In Burma, the military acted with remarkable alacrity following the coup of March 2, 1962, even though the ideological base of military action had been considered as early as 1956.<sup>1</sup> Almost immediately, they published their economic planning guidelines, The Burmese Way to Socialism.<sup>2</sup> Within months, they developed the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), a conceptual nucleus of a corporate civilian apparatus through which to govern.<sup>3</sup> Shortly thereafter, they formulated

an ideology, The System of Correlation of Man and His Environment,<sup>4</sup> tapping into the mainstream of nationalist political sentiment. The ideology seized on the two central themes of the nationalist struggle--socialism and Buddhism--and did so in the Burman, not the Burmese, context.<sup>5</sup>

In Burma, the prognosis is for continued military domination through a "civilianized," but transparent, political screen. The future importance of the military in Burma has in part been shaped by its heterogeneous origins and evolution, its use of mythic symbols to capture legitimacy, and its self conception of its own efficacy, all of which are essential to understanding its future.

#### The Burmese Military-Origins and Transformation

The Burma tatmadaw (armed forces) are an outgrowth of three distinct, contrasting traditions: the colonial forces in the service of the British; the Burma Independence Army and its successors, influenced by the Japanese; and the indigenous service created since independence. Each has affected the composition of the forces, and attitudes toward the military's role in the civilian aspects of state management.

The imperial military practice in Burma mirrored the British policy in India, from which Burma was governed for most of the colonial era. The military was recruited not from the Burmans but from the "martial races," the hill tribes that were generally governed separately from the Burman majority. It was, after all, the Burmans from whom the nationalist movement emanated and who had to be subdued. The result just prior to World War II was that only about 12 percent of the armed forces were Burman. In contrast, over one-quarter was Karen, and over one-fifth each Chin and Kachin.<sup>6</sup> The armed forces were apolitical not only because their leadership was British, but also because their soldiery were recruited from groups generally outside of the nationalist struggle, a smouldering but rising flame between the two world wars.

The second element, critical for both the source and the legitimacy of the present leadership, was the Burma Independence Army. It was an anti-British offshoot of the "Minami Organ," the Japanese intelligence unit set up to infiltrate Burma just prior to World War II. It evolved into the Burma Defense Army under the pseudo-independent state set up by the Japanese, and then into the Burma National Army that fought against the Japanese in the closing year of the war. It is especially important in that it changed the balance of the composition of the forces from minority to Burman, strongly affected the Burman leadership, and, indeed, set the stage for negotiations for independence and for eventual Japanese cooperation in the economic development of an independent Burma.

The Japanese recruited 30 Burmese who participated in the occupation of Burma and raised an army of essentially Burmans to assist the Japanese in their subjugation of Burma on promises of Burmese

independence. These "Thirty Comrades," as they became known, have become almost legendary figures in modern Burmese independent history. Foremost among them was General Aung San, the architect of Burmese independence. General Ne Win was also in the group, and the iterated story of his association with them is part of an orchestrated campaign to transfer the aura and mantle of Bogyoke Aung San, who was assassinated in 1947, to Bogyoke Ne Win, the only two men in contemporary Burma with such appellations.

The Defense Services Academy at Maymyo is the third, and newest, tradition. The Burmese "West Point" grants degrees from the University of Rangoon, and it has become the elite channel to higher social and economic status (as well as military rank) since 1962.

Graduating class loyalty is yet to become evident, at least to foreign observers, in Burma (in contrast to Korea, for example), but the esprit associated with that institution may eventually make the military academy an even more important element in the Burma power structure as graduates assume more senior rank. This is especially true as the extensive broadening of general university-level education has reduced its elite status as its numbers increase. The class loyalties, that (together with regional origins) determine in large part military power in Korea, are replaced in Burma with affiliation based on regiment, more in the British tradition. Ne Win was a member of the 4th Burma Rifles, a group that still dominates military cliques in Burma today.

#### The Caretaker Government: Preparations for Permanent Power

Approximately a decade after World War II, a body of western academic literature began to appear that characterized Third World military organizations as providing the clearcut goals and non-traditional professionalism that were necessary for economic and national development. The military was said to be less corrupt, less prone to factionalism, and more task oriented, as well as a welcome force for rationalism and skill development in societies that had few trained individuals. The professionalism of the Burmese army earlier was apparent by the way it gradually re-established government control over a substantial portion of the nation against overwhelming odds, confronted as it was by rebellions of various shades and hues from all quarters.

Burma also seemed a cardinal example of the validity of this concept during the year and a half in which the military, under what became known as the "Caretaker Government," held power after a "constitutional coup d'etat" and ran the Burmese government before returning it (for about two years) to civilian rule. In retrospect, this Caretaker period (1958-1960) was vital to the formation of political attitudes in high Burmese military circles that encouraged them later to return to power.

The intense factionalism that split the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), the umbrella political organization that since

World War II had led the nation, prompted the Caretaker period. So intense were the civilian personal antagonisms that civil war was rumored should the scheduled elections of November 1958 be held. The military claimed, rightly, that they came to power to hold the nation together. Although the constitutional niceties were duly honored, there seems little doubt that the civilian politicians acquiesced to military administration under considerable duress.

The Burmese military, for the first time, developed confidence in their ability to manage the non-military aspects of state affairs. They devoted full attention to the task of righting (temporarily) a listing economy, conducting vigorous campaigns against the insurgents, negotiating foreign treaties, and streamlining the administration.

During this period, the military had placed over 150 officers in all government ministries and organizations and carried out massive campaigns to accomplish a set of very explicit goals. Prices were lowered in the bazaar, new towns were created outside of Rangoon, and squatters summarily removed to the new sites. The Defense Services Institute (a type of military commissary and post exchange) was expanded to encompass some 25 separate business and industrial enterprises. Observers commented widely that the quality and efficiency of internal government had improved. In addition, Ne Win, as prime minister, succeeded in negotiating a long-sought border agreement with the Chinese, formulated a boundary agreement with the Thai, and was able to force the Shan sawbwas (maharajas) to relinquish their titular civil authority, if not their social prestige, an act that later was to have severe repercussions.

Upon completion of what they regarded as their heroic tasks, the military published their eulogy on their temporary rule, Is Trust Vindicated?,<sup>7</sup> comparing their cleansing of the Burmese administration to Hercules cleaning the Augean stables. To many, the analogy seemed apt.

In March 1960, as originally promised, an open and reasonably honest election was held with U Nu winning an overwhelming majority over opposition leadership that the military was said to favor.

In a sense, the Caretaker period was the crucible for the formation of military attitudes toward state power that have proven critical for the quarter century that followed. With an extremely limited time set to demonstrate accomplishments (as well as to evidence decay), they could devote all energies to specific tasks. Factionalism had no opportunity to develop, corruption was insignificant if it existed, and all bureaucratic impediments could be swept aside by placing talented officers in every department. They were answerable to no other group. In comparison with the U Nu administration, in which 60,000 sand pagodas could be built overnight to ward off evil influences, they seemed rational, efficient, secular, and modern.



### The Coup and Its Aftermath

The traditional Shan and Kayah State leadership gathered in Rangoon in February and March 1962 to consider the unrealistic but legal option of the Shan State to secede from the Union of Burma under the constitution of 1947. To preserve national unity, the military acted with speed and secrecy to take over the government and arrest the leaders. The timing was evidently a result of the deteriorating minority situation, but the alacrity and confidence with which they acted and their determination to continue in power was probably based on a confidence enhanced by the Caretaker period. The tensions that plagued national unity in the Union of Burma since independence were neither alleviated nor solved by that action. They are perhaps less near solution today than they were then.

After establishing a revolutionary council, military leaders under Ne Win moved to consolidate power. They purged the state of divisive elements. Civilian politicians and administrators, such as judges, who might legally threaten military rule were jailed. The military dismissed civilian officials who had served in the elite Indian and Burmese Civil Services, and the legislature was dissolved. The army took over local government, and shortly thereafter it banned all political parties except the Burma Socialist Programme Party, which remained for almost a decade a cadre unit composed of Ne Win and a few trusted military associates.

After replacing the more moderate Brigadier Aung Gyi as his heir apparent with a militant socialist, Brigadier Tin Pe, Ne Win acquiesced in an orgy of nationalistic socialism. The government nationalized some 15,000 businesses and industries, and forced tens of thousands of Indian and Pakistani businessmen and their families to be repatriated to their home nations. The army commandeered private wealth in cash and in banks and instituted an isolationist policy restricting entry and egress.

In addition to a growing economic crisis that only became apparent a few years after the socialist policy was enforced, Ne Win had to deal with four political issues. These were: establishing a reliable mass political party, formulating a plan for orderly succession after his departure, developing an institution through which to govern, and dealing with the problem of national political unity. The putative answers to all these issues were contained in the constitution of 1974.

This constitution, which was long in formulation and which went through a number of drafts that were widely circulated, was approved by referendum in December 1973, and went into effect on March 2, 1974, twelve years to the day after the coup. It placed sovereignty in a nationally elected Pyithu Hluttaw (National Assembly). From among its membership, the Pyithu Hluttaw elects a council of state, the chairman of which is the president, and a council of ministers, whose chairman is the prime minister. The Burma Socialist Programme Party is designated as the only legal party in the state, and the single-slate assembly elections

are designed to ratify party choices for office. Similar procedures are evident at the seven division or seven state level, and lower down at the township, of which there are 314. The constitution reads very much like one of a number of similar documents from East European nations, which seem to have been the models.

Thus, the military formally resolved two critical political issues by this constitution: the method of designating an heir and the mechanism through which to govern. These, in turn, were dependent on the formation of the single legal party, a process that had been in process virtually since the coup.

Although for almost a decade Ne Win kept the BSPP small enough to be considered a "kitchen cabinet" with no more than two dozen members, the military founded a series of mass organizations that were designed to spread the party's word throughout the country. A peasant's organization and a worker's organization were the two most important, but there were many of a trade nature. The party itself moved slowly into a mass organization, and in June and July 1971 the first party congress was held. Among other agenda items, it considered and approved a plan for economic reform, a liberalization program within the socialist context that re-established economic relations with much of the outside world as a matter of policy. Burma requested assistance from the World Bank, later joined the Asian Development Bank, and, overall, in a few years increased donor support over ten times.<sup>8</sup>

Although the BSPP titularly and constitutionally directs the national assembly, the party in turn is the product of, and is controlled by, the Burmese military. Through the military command structure, the army has mobilized about two thirds of its membership to play party roles. The BSPP central committee is dominated by active and retired military, and although party membership has expanded to over one million, the core of the power within the party is still in military hands not only at the national level, but at local levels as well. The continuing domination of the political process by Ne Win after he retired from the role of president in 1981 was no doubt due to his personal prestige, power, and patronage system, but it also was a product of his retention of the party chairmanship, a position he still holds.

The constitution was also designed to settle the issue of the nature of the state and the role of the minorities. At issue was whether the state should be federal or union, as the previous constitution of 1947 had stipulated, or whether it was to be unitary. It was no surprise that the unitary model was the one chosen.

The constitution divided Burma into seven divisions, representing Burma Proper (essentially Burman areas), and seven states (representing the minorities). Yet the states have no real power and no autonomy. The military removed the titular confederation that had been a stamp of the civilian governments, even though the Burmans held real authority, and substituted spurious administrative symmetry instead. Minorities were

given no special legislative role and no special rights or privileges, both of which they previously had. Minority persons may participate in the political process, but only as members of the BSPP, and although the constitution protects and indeed fosters the rights of language and culture of the minority peoples, there has been a clearly perceived diminution of minority authority.

Some have argued that the 1974 constitution is more in tune with Burmese traditional experience than that of 1947,<sup>9</sup> for the Burman center has always tried (and usually succeeded) in controlling the minority periphery. But where the traditional state was defined by its center and exerted varying degrees of control over its hinterland, the modern Burmese state must take into account the changed perceptions of the minorities toward centralized power. This the military has failed to do. A return to the traditional past mode of Burman-minority relations is not feasible.

The military has tended to regard the solution to minority insurrection as a military one, but this approach ignores both political and military reality. The minorities, in large part stripped of their former role within the Burmese military and excluded from leadership positions in it, have indicated by their actions that they are not prepared to accept subordinate positions under a unitary state. Conversely, the Burmese military neither has the manpower nor the mobility to pacify effectively the broad areas under the control of the various rebellions. It is evident that the opium trade has increasingly played a major role in some of the rebellions, especially those in the Shan State, which further complicates and intensifies the economic motivation for autonomy from Rangoon.

Participation in the political process has been further clouded by the military-sponsored passage of the Nationalities Act in 1982,<sup>10</sup> which effectively creates two classes of citizenship. The first is composed of all nationalities of peoples resident in Burma prior to the First Anglo-Burmese War of 1824 and those essentially second-class citizens who came after. This legislation is directed against the Indians, and others from the subcontinent, and the Chinese. The law is obscure and difficult to interpret, but, based on earlier published drafts, it seems evident that individuals in these groups are excluded from holding significant positions within the state. Although there is an administrative review process, the reasons for the decisions are secret, and there is no appeal. In a sense, the act, along with earlier expulsion of Indians and Pakistanis after the coup, is the culmination of the process of Burman nationalism, before independence most strongly articulated by the sangha (monkhood) and students, and more recently by the Burman military. This has been a critical factor in contemporary Burmese politics and life.

#### Conclusions: On the Role and Future of the Military in Burmese Politics

To the foreign observer and theoretician, the dichotomy between the rational, task-oriented military and the emotional, religious, civilian Burmese governments was attractive. It offered a set of intellectually

desirable, clear, and distinct paradigms for analysis. The Caretaker period eminently demonstrated this point. It has turned out, over the longer term, to be both simplistic and false. At first, the military seemed free from factionalism and corruption. Both have become evident since the coup. Rationalism in policy formation since that time has become hostage to ideological and political needs. After they solidified their power base, the ruling elite introduced the pragmatism evident in the Caretaker period belatedly and in economic tactics only, but not in either economic or political ends.

The military, in general, and Ne Win, in particular, have exhibited conceptions of the role of both state and personal power that are remarkably traditional. Although Ne Win at first could quietly eliminate Buddhism as the state religion (a political plank that helped elect U Nu prime minister in 1960), he recognized this as divisive and later evoked religion for political legitimacy. Ne Win "purified" the sangha, as had the Burmese monarchs, ordered the building of a pagoda, as both U Nu and the kings had done on innumerable occasions, and in a sense treated the concept of power as personalized in a contemporary setting in a manner that could be characterized as being as much traditional as modern.

The Burmese economy today is as structurally traditional as it is socialistically modern. Burmese kings traditionally held a monopoly on oil and teak production, as well as on all export trade. They exercised strict controls over entrepreneurial activities and regarded the land as royal property that they could dispense as they wished. Monarchical socialism and the impact of "The Burmese Way to Socialism" are so similar that the relationship should not be ignored, even if it may not be conscious.

Whether Burma, then, is a revolutionary socialist society, as its administration would like all to believe, or a traditional imperial court with modern trappings, is a real, but perhaps unanswerable, question on which there is much to be said on both sides. Whichever might be a more appropriate designation, the continuities of the Burman tradition have strongly influenced the military in Burmese politics and been used by the military to legitimate their rule.

The foreign conception of Theravada Buddhist states as pacifistic and their leaders as other worldly is as patently false as it is widespread. Burmese leaders may have sometimes been considered as "embryo Buddhas," but the military leader is equally a part of the Burman tradition. Kings were cakravatans, universalistic rulers who unified and conquered to bring about the new Buddhist era. It is not surprising that folk mythology mentions Aung San as the reincarnation of King Alaungpaya (1752-1760), the "embryo Buddha" who was as much warrior as religious leader, and Ne Win as descendant from Alaungpaya as well.

The military leaders have consciously sought legitimacy in fostering the concept that they, and Ne Win, are the heirs to the nationalist struggle and to Aung San. Perhaps they unconsciously have adapted other aspects of traditional Burma to their present needs. That

Ne Win married the great granddaughter of King Thibaw, the last Burman monarch, may not be simple happenstance; the marriage of his son into the Kengtung sawbwa family, another traditional pattern, also evokes memories.

Burmese military officers, by nature of the command structure, may have been better organized than their civilian predecessors, but as they have retained power they have increasingly exhibited the various traits that have previously marked Burmese political life: factionalism, power personalized, and corruption. They differ from their civilian counterparts in that they all increasingly emerge from a single crucible, the military educational system, even if their origins are socially diverse and egalitarian. Partially because Burma was the only colony in Asia in which the traditional elites were not in some manner retained in the colonial period and then could emerge on independence, there was remarkable social mobility in the civilian period through free education, the sangha, politics, and the military. By expanding and charging for higher education, controlling the monkhood, and co-opting the political processes, the tatmadaw have created a mold, shaping the elite to a military pattern.

At the present time, Burmese politics are in fact military politics, and military politics are Burman. Under a single-party-state mobilization system, the military have controlled all aspects of authority from the lowest administrative level at the township to the center. They have eliminated separation of legislative, executive, and judicial functions, combining all within a party-controlled state. They have manipulated the civil service through the party and by seconding military officers to various departments. There is hardly a family in areas where the government can exercise authority that is not touched by the military-controlled party through party membership or one of its youth organizations, the peasants' or workers' organizations, the class groups, the government-sponsored cooperatives, and various other means.

With complete control over the elements of coercion, military leaders are likely to retain power. Although this seems self-evident, the real issue is rather who within this structure will be able to do so. Burmese politics has been a history of factionalism and personalized power, it seems unlikely in the extreme that this will change. The military have already demonstrated that they are not immune to the virus of personalism.

The political forces will also be dominated by Burmans, but whether one person can emerge as the paramount figure in Burmese politics over the short term is questionable. For all the problems he has created, Ne Win has held the state together by his predominant role and through the military patronage system he has created. There is some evidence that Ne Win, recognizing this problem, has advocated a committee system for ruling on the Yugoslav model. Such a system might formally be adopted, but if historical precedent has any meaning, it is unlikely that such a method of leadership would last long. A struggle for

power in the post Ne Win era is likely. A revolt by more junior, perhaps even more nationalistic, officers against a spectacle of senior squabbling or a struggle between front-line commanders and administrative officers is not unlikely under such circumstances.

This struggle is likely to be affected by the state of the economy, which after some years of progress, has been slowed, and growth is likely to continue to be very slow over the next few years. Burma is facing serious debt servicing problems, and, given the drop in export prices for its primary products, the economic strain will probably continue.<sup>11</sup> This will put more pressure on the leadership and may result in a greater internal focus on policies and a heightened tendency toward xenophobia, which is always latent in Burman affairs.

Over time, a new civilian elite might develop through the party structure, but if it does so, it will be with military approval. If this were to occur, it is likely to do so slowly. The older civilian elite is both not acceptable and too elderly to take over.

In the post Ne Win period, the prognosis is for continued military control over the political process and Burman domination. A struggle for power within the Burmese military is likely, and tensions exacerbated by continuing minority rebellions and the problems of the Burma communist party revolt cannot help but affect the process. An economy in tension, caught between ideological slogans and economic and administrative reality, could prompt regression to more doctrinaire socialism, a more likely prospect than liberalization. In spite of unexploited wealth and potential, the outlook for Burma is not now bright.

The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Agency for International Development or the Department of State.

#### FOOTNOTES

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2. The Burmese Way to Socialism. The Policy of Declaration of the Revolutionary Council. Rangoon: Revolutionary Council, April 30, 1962.
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7. Is Trust Vindicated? A Chronicle of a Trust, Striving, and Triumph. Being an Account of the Accomplishments of the Government of the Union of Burma, November 1, 1958-February 1, 1960. Rangoon; Director of Information, 1960.
8. The problems and policies are listed in Burma Socialist Programme Party, Long-Term and Short-Term Economic Policies of the Burma Socialist Programme Party. Rangoon: Planning Department, Ministry of Planning and Finance, December 1973, and are discussed in Steinberg, Op. cit.
9. Robert H. Taylor, "Burma's National Unity Problem and the 1974 Constitution," Contemporary Southeast Asia takes this position. See Steinberg, Op. cit., for a discussion of the constitution itself. The text is available with commentary in Albert P. Blaustein and Gisbert H. Flanz, eds. Constitutions of the Countries of the World. Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Oceana Publications, 1982.
10. The text is contained in Working Peoples Daily (Rangoon), Special Supplement, October 16, 1982. For a preliminary discussion, see David I. Steinberg, "Burma in 1982: Incomplete Transitions." Asian Survey, v. XXIII, no. 2, February 1983.
11. The most recent discussion of the Burmese economic situation is in David I Steinberg, "Burma: Unasked Questions, Unanswered Issues," forthcoming in Southeast Asian Affairs 1985. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985.

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**PANEL III**  
**Paper Three**

**THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THAI POLITICS**

by

**CLARK D. NEHER**  
Northern Illinois University

In early 1970, when I presented a lecture to my students in a course on political stability in Cambodia, I analyzed the factors that assured the "perpetuation" of Prince Sihanouk's rule: his capacity to balance contending forces, his co-optation of rivals, his political astuteness (in combination with a royal aura), and his veneration by the peasantry. One month later, Prince Sihanouk was overthrown by the Cambodian military and the nation began its long, tragic era of oppression and instability.

Humbled by that experience, I have been wary of making predictions about the future of Southeast Asian politics. It is only partially reassuring that few other social science scholars had foreseen the events in Cambodia. Other events which were not predicted by scholars include the duration and intensity of the Vietnam war, the 1973 student-led revolt in Thailand and the subsequent bloody coup of October 1976, the Gestapo coup in Indonesia, the 1969 race riots in Malaysia, and the impact of the Sino-Soviet split on intraregional relations in Southeast Asia.

In this essay, nevertheless, I analyze the role of the military in contemporary Thai politics, beginning with a brief overview of the period since the overthrow of the absolute monarchy in 1932. Next, I discuss the conventional reasons for the military's dominant and long-standing role in Thai politics. The core of the essay assesses the present situation, focusing on the possibilities for military intervention against the elected government of Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanond. The essay ends with alternative views of Thailand's political future.

Overview

For the past 52 years, Thailand has been led by 15 prime ministers, six of whom were military officers. Those army leaders have ruled for 39 years, while civilian prime ministers (several of whom were puppets of the military) were in office for only 13 years. During this period, there have been nine successful coups and six unsuccessful attempts to replace the legitimate government. Numerous rebellions, and temporary, as well as "permanent," constitutions, round out a picture of an unstable society. One variable, however, has remained constant: the dominance of the military, at the highest levels of government, for all but a few years—most recently during the 1973-76 "Democratic Period."



There is some difficulty in categorizing a regime as "military" or "civilian," because the Thai army has militarized the political system and, in turn, has been "civilianized" by the political system. At present, the nation is led by General Prem Tinsulanond, who retired from the army in August 1981, and became a "civilian" prime minister. Is it accurate, therefore, to refer to the Prem government as a civilian or military regime? His associations are both military and civilian; and, though his style remains mostly military, he no longer wears an army uniform. Prem was elected to the position of prime minister by a coalition of civilian parliamentary members, but his military connections have been as important as his bureaucratic and political alliances for keeping him in the top government position.

Thus, there are no precise lines that separate civilian from military rule. Virtually all Thai regimes have sought allies from both power centers, and, perhaps, none so successfully as that of Prime Minister Prem, who has managed to stay in office for four years, longer than any "civilian" administration since the 1932 revolt.

The conventional view of Thai politics is that the kingdom is a superb example of a nation with the proper preconditions for military rule. Since high political posts have been held by very few people and since governmental participation has been concentrated in the bureaucracy, it has been possible to dominate the entire political system by controlling the bureaucratic structure. And since extra-bureaucratic institutions have been inconsequential, they have been easily bypassed. In addition, the fact that Bangkok is the nation's only major city considerably eases the logistical problems associated with coups. Moreover, Thailand has been independent of foreign influence that opposes the means or the results of coups d'etat. Since World War II, the United States has had pervasive influence in Thailand but has not opposed the leaders of coups, principally because they have consistently proclaimed anti-communist and pro-American sentiments.

The military is the best-organized group in the kingdom, and, in terms of discipline and hierarchy, has no rival. Thus, the national emphasis on hierarchy, defense, and status has been congruent with the military's organization, which is based on superior-subordinate relationships. The army has been able to count on the loyalty and obedience of its followers to a much greater extent than can ad hoc groups of politicians.

The record of civilian rule during the constitutional periods has been neither lengthy nor illustrious. By decrying civilian ineptness, corruption, and malfeasance, and by proclaiming the threat of communist-led insurgency and the inability of civilian regimes to cope with the threat, military leaders have persuaded the bureaucratic polity that they can do a better job of governing the nation. When they have been unable to persuade the civilian leadership, the military has forcibly grasped power. Before October 6, 1976, military coups were remarkably nonviolent, despite the movement of troops and their weaponry.

Modern Thai history, then, has been noted for the absence of institutionalized norms of succession, with the coup the more or less standard means by which Thai governments change. Indeed, several constitutions have deemed the coup d'etat a legitimate and sanctioned means for establishing new governments. In the past several years, however, fundamental changes in Thai society raise significant questions about the validity of this "conventional" interpretation of the role of the military in Thai politics.

Until the past decade, Thai political leadership has been undistinguished and characterized by self-interested goals and values. The political system was stagnant, highly centralized, and distant from the rural people. Corruption pervaded the bureaucratic polity. Personalism, concentrated on building patron-client factions rather than on innovative programs, characterized the regimes.

The military's dominance over political life was partly responsible for the stagnation and self-serving nature of the governments. Despite some attempts by military leaders to bring technocrats into their administrations, the primary criterion for any policy was whether it would help perpetuate a particular regime.

At a formal level, the Thai military established representative institutions that helped legitimate the regime in power. Elected representatives symbolized "Thai democracy" and perpetuated the myth that the people are sovereign and exert their power through their representatives. In reality, elected national assemblymen have had only peripheral influence over policymaking. The 1973 student-led revolt began to change the Thai view of legitimate participation by mobilizing Thais at all levels of society, but its leaders' lack of experience in political participation and, eventually, their suppression brought the Democratic Period to an ignoble end. Nevertheless, fundamental changes in the structures of government and the attitudes of both the rulers and the ruled about the proper role of the military in Thai politics emanated from the 1973-76 interregnum.

Chai-Anan Samudavanija has written:

At the core of the modern Thai political dilemma is the search for an effective and stable political system....The crisis of political leadership is particularly significant because personalism remains the preferred mode of political action. Thai people identify a system with its leaders. The "Thai way" of solving a problem or meeting a crisis is not to look to the institutionalization of new structures and organizations, but, instead, to search for a leader, an individual with the personal capabilities, status, and "grace" (barami), who could engender trust and respect on the part of his followers....Since Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat's death almost two decades ago, no such clear leadership has emerged. (The Thai Young Turks, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982, p. 2.)

The major thesis of this essay is that in the past decade or so, Thailand has changed in important ways that make this view less accurate for present-day Thailand. These changes have produced a political-social-economic system that is no longer conducive to the intervention of the military in governmental affairs, especially through the seizure of power. Thailand's politics have become both more institutionalized and open, with civilian technocrats and politicians ensconced in the power centers and the public's attitudes inimical to army intervention. In short, the era of the coup d'etat and the personalized rule of the strongman may have come to an end.

More specifically, the essay's thesis is that, barring some extraordinary situation (such as General Prem's incapacity due to illness or the like), the present regime will not be overthrown by unconstitutional means. If this prognosis holds true, Prem's tenure will end in 1987, when elections are scheduled--unless, of course, he is reelected to the position of prime minister.

#### Economic Growth

Thailand's remarkable economic growth in the past decades has fundamentally changed the character of the citizenry. An educated middle class has emerged in Bangkok, as well as in the provincial capitals and small towns of the kingdom. With per capita income growing at an average annual rate of over 7 percent, to about \$800 (compared to \$150 just 20 years ago), and with literacy becoming universal among the younger generation, Thailand has joined the ranks of the Emerging Middle-Income Countries. The result has been the rise of a vibrant, articulate class that views military rule as an anachronism, unsuited to the nation's well-being.

Related to the rise of the new middle class is the increased sophistication of the nation's agricultural class. Rice, rubber, tin, and teak made up 80 to 90 percent of all exports in the 1950s, but declined to just half of all exports by the mid-1960s as Thailand launched an era of agricultural expansion and new technology. (The percentage is even lower today.) This diversification verifies the view of the Thai farmer as a profit-oriented rational being, rather than as the stereotypical economically naive peasant. Part of the reason for the dramatic change in the lives of rural Thais stems from communication networks that pervade the nation. Infrastructure, such as roads, railroads, electricity, and transportation, is now in place.

Thailand's fifth five year-development plan (1982-86) is by far the best. The plan's emphasis on equity rather than growth, on the agricultural sector rather than only on industrialization, and on decentralization has changed the way resources are allocated and bureaucracies organized. Part of the reason for the plan's success is the rise of highly educated and skilled technocrats in the Budget Bureau, the National Economic and Social Development Board, and related ministries. These young and sophisticated technocrats have public-regarding, rather

than self-interested, values as they carry out their responsibilities and implement the goals of the five-year plan.

The new middle class, industrialists, bankers, and service oriented personnel, all graduates of Thailand's rapidly expanding higher education system, have little patience with the inefficiencies that have characterized military dominated bureaucratic regimes. They desire the stability of a moderate government that encourages technocrats to run the ministries, holds the lid on corruption, restricts the rise of labor organizations, controls the military while continuing to allocate sufficient resources for security, and allows various political and economic forces such as political parties and parliament to participate in the affairs of the state. Thailand's economic growth has brought about a significant new class concerned with effectiveness and stability, and supportive of the Prem administration.

### Insurgency

Since 1979, there has been a stunning change in the fortunes of the communist-led guerrilla insurgency that threatened Thai security for two decades. In the past, military leaders pointed to this threat as a primary reason for military dominance, but the virtual collapse of the communist movement has removed that rationale. By 1984, the movement's United Front had collapsed, most of the cadre and leaders have defected, the guerrilla military bases have been wiped out, and outside support (from Vietnam and China) has all but vanished.

The reasons for the loss of support for the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT), while rural-based revolutionary movements have been thriving in other parts of the world, stem from internal and external conditions. Thailand's consistent and booming economic growth and the clear improvement in the living conditions of rural Thais have undercut support for the party. Moreover, the governments of Prime Ministers Kriangsak Chomanand and Prem Tinsulanond have initiated a number of rural development projects, particularly in areas where insurgency had been greatest.

Beginning in 1977, the government offered amnesty to insurgents who would defect from the communist cause. Some 9,000 (of the estimated 12,000) have taken advantage of the program by surrendering to government officials. The plan calls for the distribution of farmland to defectors, who are called phu ruam pattana chat Thai (participants in Thai national development), instead of the more pejorative term defector.

Rivalries internal to the CPT also contributed to the demise of party strength. Because of a major schism among party factions, centering on ideological differences, pro-Chinese and pro-Vietnamese groups have not been able to fashion an essentially "Thai road" to revolution.

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In addition, external variables have contributed to the demise of the CPT. Vietnam stopped financial support of the party after it was invaded by Chinese forces in 1978. The People's Republic of China similarly withheld funds, after diplomatic relations with Thailand were established in 1979. China now attaches greater weight to its relations with the government of Thailand than to its relations with the CPT. China's support of Khmer resistance forces in Cambodia requires the cooperation of Thai officials. Also, refugees have poured into Thailand with horror stories of life under communist rule in Laos and Cambodia, thereby undermining the support that Thais might have given to communist insurgents in their own country.

Paradoxically, insurgency was at its height during the era of Prime Minister Thanin Kraivichian, the most anti-communist regime in contemporary Thai politics. Moreover, once the United States removed its counterinsurgency experts and let the Thais handle the situation (by their policy of "politics over military"), counterinsurgency successes increased. Finally, rather than exacerbating the insurgency problem, Thailand's establishment of diplomatic relations with China brought about the withdrawal of outside support for Thai guerrillas.

Each of these points undermines the military's claim that only it has the means and fortitude to secure the nation's security against internal upheaval. Many Thais now see that a program of economic development, generous amnesty, national reconciliation, and a balanced foreign policy may be a more effective way to combat insurgency than the traditional reliance on military force.

#### International Context

The Thai military is inextricably linked not only to domestic political and economic issues but also to the regional and international environment. Throughout its history, Thailand has been buffeted by its neighbors and by the international powers. By their pragmatic foreign policy of "bending with the wind," Thai governments have managed to retain the formal independence of the kingdom whenever all its neighbors have succumbed to colonial rule.

The present government's greatest concern is its relations with communist neighbors. Just as the military has justified its intervention into government affairs by pointing to domestic insurgency, the army has claimed that external communist powers threaten Thai sovereignty. During the Democratic Period of 1973-76, when Thailand was ruled by civilians, the governments in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos became communist regimes. Thailand became a "front-line state," with enemy troops at its borders. The Thai military, who were shocked by these changes, felt that only an authoritarian, military-dominated government could deal with such threats.

In 1984, a direct threat to Thai sovereignty from Indochina is no longer possible. Indeed, Thailand's security is not imminently threatened

by any adversary. The kingdom's leaders still look to the United States as a major ally, although Thailand has moved away from the American center stage. This movement reflects the American government's view that Thailand enjoys sustained economic growth and development, political stability, and security from outside intervention.

To assure that Vietnam remains unable to threaten Thai sovereignty, Thailand and the United States have supported the policy of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to isolate Vietnam, to support the Cambodian rebels against the Vietnamese puppet regime in Phnom Penh, and to bring world opinion to denounce Soviet-Vietnamese aggression. This policy has strengthened Thailand's relationship with the government of the People's Republic of China, which also opposes the Vietnamese-dominated regime of Heng Samrin in Cambodia. The military no longer sees China as a principal security threat.

The Prem government's foreign policy has continued the balanced approach, with emphasis on the ASEAN alliance, while retaining a hardline against Vietnam. There are no serious crises that the army could use to rationalize the overthrow of the existing constitutional administration.

#### Institutionalization

Thailand has not had a strongman as ruler since 1963, when Marshal Sarit Thanarat died. From 1963 to 1973, Deputy Prime Minister and Army Commander-in-Chief Prapat Charusthiara, commanded the loyalty of military officers and top-level government bureaucrats, but he did not control overall policymaking. For two decades, one-man policymaking has not existed. Instead, a number of institutions have arisen with functions that replace the personalistic rule of the past. Personalism, in the form of patron-client relationships, still pervades every level of Thai politics; however, as the process of modernization takes hold, new means for articulating popular demands have been established, and the system's capacity to cope through patron-client behavior has changed.

These new institutions, which include interest groups, political parties, nongovernmental associations, and decentralized ministerial units, have a high degree of legitimacy. In the face of public acceptance of these institutions, the military would find an attempt at seizing power opposed with very strong resistance. The kingdom has accepted procedures for the transfer of political power. These procedures have worked well since 1977, the year of the last successful coup in Thailand. The likelihood of unconstitutional intervention by the military decreases with the rise of such procedures.

Military intervention occurs less frequently in nations that have a high degree of legitimacy. The bulk of the Thai people accept the Prem government as legitimate and as capable of resolving the nation's major problems. Moreover, the king has indicated his support for the present

government. His involvement in politics reached its peak in 1981, when he supported Prime Minister Prem against the dissident colonels who staged a short-lived coup d'etat. The refusal of many army personnel to support the coup, in keeping with the wishes of the king, was an indication of his influence. It is true that the king, who is venerated throughout the kingdom, risks losing his aura and prestige as he is brought into the political fray; thus far, however, his support has stabilized the Prem regime and mitigated attempts to overthrow his government.

The kingdom has undergone a "civilianizing" of its military-dominated, personalistic polity--which is not to say that Thai politics no longer has problems of corruption, factionalism, and self-serving authorities. Such pathologies continue in abundance in the present government. Yet there is clearly a difference in the kinds and number of institutions that controlled the government under Sarit Thanarat and Thanom Kittikachorn in the 1960s and early 1970s, and those that dominate under Prime Minister Prem.

Political parties today are fewer in number, more coherent in structure, and better able to represent citizens' demands, in contrast to the personal orientation of parties just a decade ago. The civilian-controlled lower house of the national assembly is no longer impotent, the puppet of the military-controlled cabinet, as it was during the 1960s and 1970s (despite former Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj's view that Thailand's elected representatives are "shameless and have no concept of sin").

The parliament has become a legitimate institution for the expression of opposition to the present government and to the military. Indeed, prominent retired military leaders such as former Prime Minister General Kriangsak Chomanand have shifted their alliance to the parliamentary forum. In the next election, General Harn Leenanond, who has been a critic of General Arthit and who resigned from the army after being stymied in his bid for a higher military position, will undoubtedly win a parliamentary seat in the South. The parliament, then, acts as a safety valve for military leaders who have lost factional battles.

In an unprecedented act of independence, the parliament, in 1983, voted against a series of amendments to the constitution that would have enhanced the army's political strength. The vote jeopardized the political future of key army figures, undermined the army's control over parliament, and strengthened the large civilian-based political parties such as the Democrats and Social Action Party (traditionally the bane of the military).

Again, in 1984, supporters of Army Commander-in-Chief General Arthit Kamlang-ek urged the national assembly to revise the constitution to allow active military officers to hold government posts. A crisis was averted when the legislature voted to postpone a decision on the matter. Refusal to acquiesce to the army's wishes is an indication that the legislature wants to protect its prerogatives, to continue the nation's progress toward civilian democratic rule, and is more and more confident

about its higher level of institutionalization and legitimacy. The fact that military officers backed off their demands when they were rebuffed indicates their perception of a government that is not ripe for intervention.

Rural Thais are no longer the passive peasantry read about in textbooks. Increasingly, a larger number of Thais are engaging in political activity, have contact with officials, have joined interest groups and participated in village projects, and have some knowledge of governmental processes. Rapid population growth, a scarcity of cultivatable land, and the advent of a cash economy have led to increased membership in farmers' groups, more interaction between peasants and officials, greater mobility, and looser patron-client ties.

The most vivid evidence of the politicization of the Thai peasantry was during the 1973-76 Democratic Period, when the student-led revolt resulted in the overthrow of the military government and its replacement by civilian authorities. After October 1973, the peasantry became more involved in politics than ever before. With the support of student activists, but mostly on their own, farmers began to organize to express their grievances against landlords, moneylenders, and corrupt officials who, for generations, had exploited them.

This experience has not been lost on the rural Thai nor on the army leaders, who now know the potential power of an aroused peasantry. Although the rural people do not yet constitute a united group with "clout," their potential power reduces the chances of a coup d'etat against a popular government.

#### Military Organization

Under the present administration, the military has received substantial budget allocations and has been supported by the ministry of defense, under the leadership of retired General Prem. During the 1973-76 period, when civilians ruled the kingdom, the generals balked at reporting to a civilian minister of defense. Prem has finessed that problem by appointing himself to the position. Usually, when an army commander-in-chief retires he loses his base of support; Prem, however, has retained his army following and continues to command respect from the leading generals. Prem himself promoted the military leadership that has treated them generously. Moreover, he has shown that he can mobilize influential groups when his position is threatened. His masterful use of the monarchy to help counter the 1981 Young Turk coup, his courtship of the American embassy, and his astute handling of Army Commander-in-Chief Arthit illustrate his capacity as a leader.

The military today is factionalized into two groupings, neither of which is specifically anti-Prem. The dominant group is led by General Arthit, who is Commander-in-Chief, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and head of the Bangkok Peacekeeping Force. Arthit took the supreme commander position after Prem approved a proposal in 1982 that



the commanders-in-chief of the army, navy, and air force be automatically made deputy supreme commanders, with the stipulation that the most senior of these three assume the post of supreme commander. The unexpected death of the air chief marshal and the retirement of the navy chief opened the position to Arthit. His position as army chief stemmed from his indispensable support of Prem against the Young Turk coup. Prem jumped Arthit over higher-ranking generals.

Supporting Arthit are General Pichit Kullavanich, the First Army Region Commander, and General Chaovalit Yongchaiyut, the Deputy Chief of Staff. Both generals are young (less than 55) and, like Arthit, have been supporters of Prime Minister Prem. Chaovalit, who received accolades for his leadership of the counterinsurgency against communist guerrillas, is considered to be the author of the 66/2523 doctrine of "politics over military," with its emphasis on economic and social development and amnesty, rather than military force, for countering domestic insurgency.

Arthit, Pichit, and Chaovalit are leaders of the military group that believe the military must play a leading role in governmental affairs. They seek an active role for the military in the parliament and in political parties. Their support for constitutional amendments (rejected by parliament) that would give the military a larger role in the cabinet and parliament exemplifies their view that the military has a function beyond national security.

A second major grouping, known as the Young Turks, emerged during the 1973-76 period, when the army was in disarray and there was no effective military leadership. A group of colonels, frustrated by the army's low prestige and their inability to move into higher positions, secretly organized to recoup the losses suffered by the army. In 1980, this Young Military Officers' Group withdrew its support from the Kriangsak administration, precipitating that regime's fall from power and leading to the rise of General Prem, a supporter of the colonels.

By March 1981, the colonels, most of whom graduated in Class 7 from Chulachomkhlaio Military Academy, had become disillusioned with Prem's leadership. Mostly for self-serving reasons--mainly the belief that their promotions would come more quickly under new leadership--the Young Turks organized a coup, which ended after the monarchy joined forces with Prem and General Arthit overpowered the coup. An idealistic interpretation of the colonel's motives is that, once in power, they would adopt socialistic policies (e.g., controls over multinational corporations, land reform, restructuring of the economy) and reinvigorate the Thai society.

The colonels, though dismissed from the army, remained an important force because of their class solidarity and because, as regimental and battalion commanders, they had achieved great influence in an army that was bereft of strong leadership. The Class 7 colonels had gained combat experience during the counterinsurgency, had fought in

Vietnam, and had developed professional competence and disdain for the traditional patron-client ties of the Thanom-Prapat era in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Their rapid rise threatened the equally ambitious Class 5 members led by General Arthit, who became an opponent of the Class 7 colonels.

At least temporarily, the dismissal of the Young Turk colonels provided breathing space for Prem and his ally, General Arthit, thereby reducing the possibilities of an anti-Prem coup. In August and September 1984, a series of events again raised questions about the stability of Prem's government. In mid-August, Prem became ill and was flown to the United States, where he was found to be suffering from severe influenza and incipient heart disease. After a month of tests, he returned to Bangkok, only to be rehospitalized for pulmonary complications and a partial occlusion.

While Prem was being treated, aides of Arthit again pushed the parliament to act on the constitutional amendments that had been rejected the previous year. But parliament again postponed a decision, thereby averting a crisis. At the same time, two Young Turk colonels who had been active in the 1981 coup attempt were arrested for alleged assassination plots by Crime Suppression Police Commander General Boonchu Wankanont. In an ironic turn of events, Arthit, the general who had put down the coup, secured the release of the colonels. Arthit had been mending fences with the colonels, which was interpreted by many as a prelude to his becoming prime minister, through either a coup or constitutional provisions following the resignation of Prem or the end of his tenure in 1987.

Exacerbating the tensions that arose during this period was the proposal to extend Arthit's term as commander in chief and supreme commander past the mandatory retirement age of 60. The young Turks, who had issued a statement supporting the extension, praised him for his strong leadership, which was interpreted as an implicit criticism of Prem's weakness. Prem, though he indicated he would endorse the extension, reserved for himself the timing and scope of his decision. A two-year extension could actually reduce coup tension since Arthit's retirement would then take place in 1987, coincident with elections. As a civilian, Arthit would be eligible for the prime ministership.

Despite Arthit's high-level positions, he is not universally supported. His rapid rise, following the 1981 attempted coup, catapulted him over senior (and now resentful) officers. Civilian politicians ridicule his frequent pronouncements on all areas of political life. Recently, his courting of the Young Turks dismayed his key supporters in Class 5 of the military academy, who have long been disdainful of the colonels. Prem's supporters are angry with Arthit for support of the two arrested colonels who were alleged to be part of a plot to assassinate Prem, and perhaps, members of the royal family.

Formerly, the machinations of the military were the major component of coup activity. In order to stage a coup, an army faction had only to consider its strength vis-a-vis that of other factions. At present, there is no strongman around whom a faction can rally, nor is there a prime minister in power who is anti-military.

For all these reasons--the economic, political, and social conditions of the kingdom--coup politics is a part of Thailand's past, not its future.

### Conclusion

The humbling experience alluded to at the beginning of this paper suggests the need for an "escape hatch." Clearly, Prime Minister Prem's health is a crucial variable that must be considered, despite its unpredictability. A sudden vacuum at the top would precipitate movement by both civilian and military leaders to consolidate power. If the military believes that a new prime minister would act against its interests, would undo the nation's anti-communist foreign policy, or would undermine the position of the king, General Arthit and his followers would surely move to overthrow the regime. However, such a scenario is not likely. More likely is the continuation of a bureaucratic-parliamentary form of government, sensitive to the needs and desires of the military, and following essentially conservative policies. Such a government, though not sufficiently reform-minded for many, would not generate the intense opposition that a regressive, military, authoritarian government would provoke, following a coup.

The Thailand of 1984 is fundamentally different from the Thailand of just a decade or two ago. The nation's institutions are stronger, more responsible, and less vulnerable to the instability that stems from personalism. Throughout the bureaucracy are highly trained and educated leaders with societal, rather than self-serving, values and goals. The present government is perceived by most classes and interests as meeting their interests, with a minimum of corruption and oppression. Inasmuch as no significant foreign or domestic crises threaten the country, the rationale for military intervention does not exist. Recent Thai governments have shown a remarkable capacity to blend tradition, modernity, and realpolitik in a manner that augers well for the nation's future.

### **PANEL III**

#### **COMMENTS ON PAPERS PRESENTED ON THE CURRENT AND FUTURE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

by

**JEFFREY D. BAKER**  
Carroll College

I would like to begin by reviewing one or two key statements from each paper and then focusing on what I think is a common theme of the papers. In all three nations the military is the dominant factor and is certainly preeminent in each nation's politics; but some modifications need mentioning. In David Steinberg's case saying that Burmese politics are, in fact, military politics and military politics are, in fact, Burman is the key background factor in the current political situation.

In the Thai case Clark suggests that the army has militarized the political system but has in turn been civilianized by that system. As a result, Thai politics have become more institutionalized and open. The civilian technocrats and politicians have been ensconced in power centers, but the military is still the best organized group in the kingdom and in terms of discipline and hierarchy has no rivals.

In Douglas Pike's analysis of Vietnam, the central theme is the concentration of decision-making in a civilian structure with strong armed forces representation. In defense matters he reminds us that, "What the PAVN wants, the PAVN gets." Indications from Hanoi suggest at least the possibility of eventual emergence of a politburo that starkly divides the military and civilian components.

With these comments in mind, the papers contain some common ground. One of the traits that seems most important in each case is factionalism. There are factions within each military organization as well as the ever-present competition with the civilian segment of society. The key question is how will factionalism hold up to various shocks? This is the ultimate test of how important factionalism is in these countries, particularly if the shocks are associated with economic or succession issues.

Within the military of each country, the presenters have identified important factions. In the Burma military we find a faction of young officers about whom we know very little. Much more is known about the Young Turks in Thailand. In Vietnam a new professional cadre is emerging. I am reminded by my own children that the young can often be unpredictable; and in relation to these three countries, we have to be careful in analyzing potential reactions to adverse stimuli.

In Burma the distinction between academy and non-academy status is a new development in the last 25 years. Burma's first academy graduates are now emerging as division commanders, a very powerful position in an army not top-heavy with general officers. The potential impact of factionalism centered on academy status is offset by the reality that whatever avenue is used to gain access to the military officer corps, such membership is to a very exclusive club. This is the most important factor.

Provided the military officer serves his time and does so by test of battle in the first six or seven years of his career, membership will most surely mean access to considerable power down the road. Basically, running the gauntlet secures a place in Burmese political structure which assures a piece of the good life. Much is unknown; we have little substantive insight to the Burmese military, particularly among younger officers. However, even to the untrained observer, Burmese military officers hold elite status; and one does not risk such status frivolously.

In the Thai military the factions are more easily identified since they have emerged in Thailand's open society. As contrasted to the Burmese military, identification has neutralized the potential strengths of the Young Turks. Other factions may exist, but their identity is not known.

In Vietnam the emergence of the new professionals as a power factor depends on the assimilation process. The new approach need not be divisive if combined with the proper indoctrination. New military professionalism may be more of a factor in a long-run context than in the near future.

While the younger officers represent an important element in each country, the factionalism of more immediate concern is that found at the top of each military. In Burma's case the focus is on succession. Dr. Steinberg concludes that turmoil may be the order of the day once Ne Win passes and factions emerge to secure the country's leadership. Perhaps not. In fact, we may find the immediate transition to be quite smooth. The strength of the military and the threat of ethnic unrest may be the key factors in forestalling such turmoil. Only after the initial shock has passed, may we see the emergence of in-fighting. The leadership vacuum, certain to be left in the wake of Burma's long-time leader, does not necessarily translate to trouble for this developing country.

In Thailand the scenario outlined by Dr. Neher may be overly optimistic. The trend is toward civilianization, but the level of a shock is the crucial issue. The "dog returns to the old shoe with which he is most familiar;" and other than a mild disturbance, shocks may be resolved with another coup, the response that has become familiar in years past. The nature and degree of shock are critical variables. Dr. Clark has given us a refreshing perspective by which to view current developments in Thai politics, but the perspective may not withstand much of a test when put to the fire.

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One must approach Vietnam from yet another perspective. In many ways Vietnam's heritage is factionalism. Factionalism is a military as well as civilian mindset. The counterforce is not the emerging middle class as suggested for Thailand. Certainly, Vietnam stands in stark contrast to Burma, a country where disagreement is not tolerated at all. However, the nature of factionalism may be changing in Vietnam; heightened economic stress or increased military confrontation may trigger more permanent divisions among the leadership.

In the shadow of factionalism, the type and magnitude of shocks thus become the key ingredients. In Thailand the depth of the current evolution depends on time for nurturing and on the abeyance of shocks that might sidetrack the civilianization process.

In Vietnam factionalism is less of a factor in the near term. The current leadership has found factionalism to be the way of business, but the future may hold changes as new elements surface in Vietnamese society.

In Burma who knows? The potential factions in the military add further uncertainty and exacerbate the problems posed by the ethnic minorities. Factionalism may not be quite so strong within the military as we would like to think. In Burma the military is basically the political arena. When Ne Win passes, the arena will certainly be intriguing.

**DIPLOMATIC FORUM**  
**ISSUES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS**  
**OF**  
**THE ASEAN STATES**

## DIPLOMATIC FORUM

Moderated by

**JON A. WIAINT**  
U.S. Department of State

Jon Wiant opened the session by commenting on the ASEAN states and their development as a cohesive regional force. He indicated that the 7 percent GDP is due in large part to the unique mix of state and individual cooperation which has strengthened export trade. He reflected on some of the issues which had been discussed during the conference and asserted that Cambodia is one of the most thorny problems in the region.

Mr. Wiant then introduced the speakers from the ASEAN states in turn.

### **HIS EXCELLENCY PENGIRAN HAJI IDRIS** Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam

*It is the tradition of any family, the youngest is asked to go first. I am proud to be in that family.... a useful and honorable member of that family.*

My first responsibility would be to introduce Brunei to you. I was assured by Dr. Cline that you not only know about Brunei but you care about Brunei. Brunei is not known to the United States. If you don't believe me, call AT&T and find out for yourself! If you check further you will find that we have chewing gum and coca cola there!

What are the issues and prospects within this family? We have a very strong solidarity. When we talk about Cambodia and Vietnam, you will get a consensus.

We need to retain peace and security within our state and within our nation. Having been born in the war years, I know what it is to live in a region where peace and security do not exist. Without peace and security, no other action can occur.

The most prominent issue is economics. We like to promote our ability to maintain a stable economy. We would like to acquire the ability to expand our economy away from an oil-based economy. We have timber, silica sand, etc. We want to fully realize that the end of the oil boom might be tomorrow. We want to expand our economy away from this oasis as it were. We have an ability to attract investors and businessmen, an ability to establish local industry. We have an ability to cooperate regionally to find markets for our industry.



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We have fewer than 200,000 persons in Brunei, including Texans working in the oil fields.

Our aim is to be self-sufficient in producing food for our population. We are very serious about this. The bulk of our rice, which is our staple, is imported from Thailand and the Philippines. We have purchased land in Australia for breeding livestock. The land area is actually larger than Brunei!

The issue I would like to see addressed is our ability to achieve greater and closer cooperation with the other ASEAN countries. We have a mutual responsibility for sovereignty, non-interventionist, non-interference in domestic affairs and cultural, economic exchanges. We would like to have a two-way street in foreign exchange and to be measured by the same yardstick of sincerity and willingness extended to other non-ASEAN friends like Japan and Korea. Although we are very small, we still wish to be treated in the same manner as other larger nations.

**THE HONORABLE PUDIJANTO SADARJOEN**  
**Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia**

I want to compliment Dr. Dwight King for his carefully prepared paper on my country. I would like to start by refreshing your memories about Indonesia which is located between the continents of Asia and Australia. The land area is 741,101 square miles and consists of 13,677 islands. It is on an important trade route. The population is 158 million, with a growth of 2.2 percent per year. There are 300-400 ethnic groups with their own customs and dialects. Life expectancy for males is 50 years, for females 53 years. The constitution written in 1945 was re-adopted on July 5, 1959.

The key issue for my country is development. The stress has been on economic development since 1969. The first five-year development plan (FY 1969-1974) placed an emphasis on the rehabilitation of the economy, agriculture, irrigation, and an improved transportation system. Our goal is also to provide improved housing, adequate food, and employment opportunities. The third five-year plan (FY 1979-1984) had, as its fundamental objective, economic growth and maintenance of economic and political stability. Our fourth five-year plan which began in April 1984 addresses the issue of the development of technology and equitable distribution of developmental gains, along with economic and political stability. We are trying to move our industry from oil products to non-oil products.

ASEAN was born in August 1967, based upon the Bangkok Declaration. We shared a political philosophy as well as a belief in regional solidarity. ASEAN needs peace and security in order to reconstruct.

We are shocked at the angry war machine of Vietnam which struck Cambodia. ASEAN supports the right of Cambodia to determine its own destiny. This problem is still unresolved because of Vietnam. Only when the Cambodian problem is solved can peace and security in Southeast Asia become a reality.

**THE HONORABLE ABDUL KADIR**  
**Embassy of Malaysia**

Early this year, Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir, said the following:

"The central objectives and preoccupation of Malaysia's policies are two-fold: nation-building and national development."

Those words may sound very familiar, coming from the leader of a developing country. But for us in Malaysia, these twin objectives are more than mere declarations of intent. It is not simply a preoccupation for the attainment of some long term desirable goals. The very nature of our non-homogeneous society requires that we tackle these problems with dispatch and achieve results in the shortest possible time.

The system as we know it, and would like to continue with, will be severely threatened if there is any let-up in the efforts to unite the people. We learned through bitter experience in 1969 that the people in Malaysia were capable of taking the law into their own hands. They placed the country in chaos for several days.

We have found, also, that economic development provides most of the answers. Therefore in the Malaysia, there is really no issue more key than this question of nation-building and economic development. Economic development sustains our nation-building efforts; and without a united nation and, a truly harmonious society, Malaysia, indeed, would be a very difficult country to govern and develop. Of course, it can be ruled by repression. But we like to think and believe that we are committed to the democratic system.

The Malaysian government's New Economic Policy (NEP), launched in the early 1970s, was designed to give the Malays and other indigenous people an increased share of the modern economic sector. The second tenet of the NEP, which is the eradication of poverty regardless of race, is to improve the quality of life for all in Malaysia. For those less familiar with the Malaysian situation, let me just refer to some basic statistics of the make-up of the Malaysia population which is as follows:

Malays	7.088 million
People of Chinese Origin	4.202 million
People of Indian Origin	1.287 million
Others	0.081 million
Sarawak	1.443 million
Sabah	1.178 million

The New Economic Policy was the deliberate and in some ways drastic response of the government to the imbalanced economic conditions prevailing prior to the 1970s which gave rise to the bloody inter-communal riots of 1969, which I referred to earlier.

We have gone a long way in fostering national unity. For example, we all now can speak in one language, the national language which is the Malay language. The entire administration is carried out using the national language. Parliamentary debates are conducted in the national language, too. Yesterday, one of the panelists speaking about Malaysia mentioned that a very large percentage of the population was born after independence in 1957. This group of people all speak the national language very well being products of the national school system. The usage of one common language, we feel, is vital for the creation of a sense of identity and for inculcating a feeling of belonging together.

The outlawed Communist Party of Malaya is a continuing threat to our national stability, not because it has the force of arms to seriously threaten our security, but precisely because the communists take every opportunity to exploit racial sentiments in the country. The communist armed insurgency saw its peak strength during the colonial period, lost ground after independence, and was soundly defeated by 1960.

Although there are still some remnants of armed communists, mainly in the jungle border areas between Malaysia and Thailand, the concern now is more with their subversive activities outside of the jungles.

In recent years, the Communist Party of Malaya found another fertile ground to exploit, that is Islamic religious extremism. Through the formation of front organizations the communists have espoused common cause with extremist sentiments by pretending to support Islamic revival. Their targets for influence are the Muslim Malays. In Malaysia, we say that the communists are now trying to "fish in muddy waters."

The government is determined to combat extremism in any form, be it religious or otherwise. Not only is freedom of religion enshrined in the constitution but the reality of Malaysia's great ethnic and religious diversity dictates that extremism in any form should have no place in the Malaysian society.

As for the communists, whose proclaimed objective is to offer an alternative life style especially to those less economically fortunate, the government is convinced that the answer lies in finding ways and means to

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give to all the people a better deal. Hence, the consistent and persistent exhortations to the people to increase productivity, such as by emulating the Japanese and Korean attitudes toward work and management under what is popularly known as the "look East" policy.

Economically speaking, Malaysia has not done too badly. Last year, the economy grew by 5.9 percent. This year (1984) we recorded a

growth rate of 6.9 percent and next year (1985) the rate of growth is expected to be 6.7 percent. Beyond that, Malaysia's economic performance would greatly depend on the economic performance of its major trading partners, particularly the industrial countries. If there is some degree of growth in these countries, Malaysia's export will expand. We also expect that the deficit in our balance of payments, which now stands at 7.3 percent of the gross national product, to fall to about 6 percent in 1986.

In Malaysia, we are so concerned about improvements in productivity because this is one of the surest means of increasing our national resilience which, in turn, is very essential for success in regional cooperation. In fact, the concept of national resilience has been accepted by all ASEAN states as a prerequisite for the building up of regional resilience. The development of a harmonious society and a highly productive population is, therefore, a basic consideration in all policies of the Malaysian government.

I will now say something about ASEAN and the Southeast Asian region. At the core or heart of Southeast Asia are the ASEAN countries, constituting the "positive" component of the region. For about 17 years now we in ASEAN have been engaged in the single-minded pursuit of socio-economic development within the context of regional collaboration.

In sharp contrast to the ASEAN countries are the Indochina states in which the influence and preponderance of Hanoi hold sway. They constitute the "negative" component, continuing a theater of conflict and source of political uncertainty and instability for Southeast Asia due to Vietnam's policies in Indochina. Adhering to revolutionary socialism, the Indochina states, principally Vietnam and Laos, hold up ideology as the paramount national priority and preoccupation to which everything else is subordinated. Many of their present concerns, including their obsessive preoccupation with their national security as well as the security of the Indochina peninsula, stemmed from the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia and are largely self-manufactured or self-inflicted.

The remaining years of the 1980s will be years of challenge for ASEAN to grapple with the threats from outside, the perceived dangers from Indochina, and, in view of the party-to-party relations, the long term threat from China as well as the machinations of the superpowers.

Before ending, I would like to make a short comment on the suggestion by panelist Larry Niksch, who said yesterday that the ASEAN proposal for a Cambodian settlement contains the idea of a partitioning of Cambodia. In my view, none of the ASEAN ideas contain any suggestion about partitioning Cambodia.

**THE HONORABLE ROLANDO S. GREGORIO**  
**Embassy of the Philippines**

The Philippines was an interesting topic yesterday. I hope that after my presentation there will be fewer questions! The Philippines is aware that in order for ASEAN to be strong, each country must be strong and stable. Lately the Philippines has been beset by some problems of perception of instability in the country. I would like to discuss this. The major concerns seem to be:

- 1) the health of President Marcos,
- 2) succession when the president is  
unable to complete his term,
- 3) economic problems and solutions,
- 4) insurgency and responses,
- 5) the Aquino investigation.

1. President Marcos's doctor has issued *medical bulletins* stating that the president has signs of flu which are being treated by prescribed medications, including complete rest and isolation.

2. If a Philippine president is unable to complete his term, the speaker of the national assembly shall serve as a caretaker and call a special election not earlier than 45 days but not later than 60 days from date of inability. The office of vice-president has been restored. In 1987, the Philippine people have shown their strong faith in peaceful transition through the ballots by an 85 percent turnout in our regular parliamentary elections, held last May. Civilian supremacy is deeply ingrained in our military sector. Since our independence in 1946, there has never been a coup or any known attempt to seize power.

3. The Philippines is encountering grave economic problems which are being faced with strong resolve to arrest the current slump through new directions and reforms in fiscal, monetary, and economic policies. The forthcoming approval of the Philippine Standby Credit Program with the International Monetary Fund will contribute to the revitalization of the economy.

4. Regarding the communist insurgency, President Marcos has said that the situation is under control and that political and economic stability rule out the overthrow of the government. He expressed this assessment to Senator Christopher Dodd, who visited the Philippines, November 12 through 15, 1984, during his Asian tour as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

5. President Marcos immediately referred the two reports of the Agrava Fact-Finding Board to the Ministry of Justice for the speedy prosecution of 25 military men and one civilian named in the reports. On November 5th, all accused were ordered to respond within ten days from receipt of summons. The accused asked for a more detailed specification of the charges, that is, whether they are being charged as principals, accomplices, or accessories, and asked that the witnesses whose testimonies were used as a basis for indicting them be named. The Tanodbayan (Ombudsman) and the Sandiganbayan (special court for cases involving government personnel) will prosecute and hear the cases of the accused.

**HIS EXCELLENCY KISHORE MAHBUBANI**  
**Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations**

Regarding our discussion of Cambodia, I have trouble with points made yesterday. I disagree with two universally accepted premises presented in one paper.

1. Cambodia is basically confused with Vietnam, and
2. the United States can take a back seat and follow ASEAN's lead.

In my view, the Cambodian confusion is a problem between the Soviet Union and China. This is very obvious. These two major powers fuel the confusion.

Vietnam is the biggest single obstacle. The American people have in their minds the residue of information acquired during the Vietnam conflict. There are a few hundred years of collective experience in this room...and yet there are a lot of mistaken assumptions. Our perception on Vietnam is different. I always run into an invisible wall. I'm tempted to become a terrorist to explode a bomb in the minds of the Americans, who believe Vietnam is invincible. Twenty billion U.S. dollars and 3 million men failed to defeat it.

I want to highlight some facts for you:

1. Vietnam is a very poor nation with a GNP of \$10-12 billion, less than the GNP of Singapore.
2. Vietnam is the victim of Cambodian conflict. Key actors are the USSR and China. We must get these two superpowers involved to resolve the conflict.
3. Is ASEAN in a position to intervene with these two powers? There is a quote:

"When two elephants fight, the grass suffers; when two elephants make love, the grass suffers."

History has taught us that one superpower can check another superpower. Strange that so many feel that the United States should take a back seat and let ASEAN take the lead. We don't expect the United States to send in the marines. There are other things that can help with a settlement in Cambodia. A message to key politicians in Peking and Moscow is more effective if brought by Secretary Shultz. A settlement would involve a package deal. The United States is the only superpower that can signal settlement. Japan has already offered a major contribution to reconstruct. If there were a similar commitment from the United States it might work. "Once you sit on a hot stove, you don't sit on it even when it gets cold."

The key concern is growing Soviet presence. Vietnam is the only place in the region where Soviet ships can get fuel. The United States is still the strongest superpower in Southeast Asia. ASEAN combined is now the fifth largest trading partner to the United States. There is a failure to recognize the dawn of a new era. The age of revolution is now over in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Basin. The center of revolution is now capitalism which is sweeping the Pacific Basin.

Singapore is one of the most advanced areas. The tallest building in the world is in Singapore, the best airline, the best port. The most comprehensive biotechnology research center outside Japan will be in Singapore.

Again, I reiterate, the Vietnam problem must be solved if there is to be peace and security in the ASEAN region.

**THE HONORABLE SAKTHIP KRAIRIKSH**  
**Royal Thai Embassy**

The question of peace and stability in Southeast Asia remains uppermost in the minds of all ASEAN policymakers. For five years now, peace in Southeast Asia has been fragmented by the Cambodian problem; its restoration retarded by the intransigence of Vietnam.

Although not a party to the Cambodian conflict, Thailand has been seriously affected by the problem due to its geographical proximity to Cambodia, which in effect makes Thailand a front-line state. The deployment of a large number of Vietnamese troops along the Thai-Cambodian border poses a direct threat to Thailand's security. The continued fighting in that country has on numerous occasions spilled over into Thailand in violation of her territorial integrity. There have been many incidents of Vietnamese incursions into Thai territory resulting in the loss of lives of Thai soldiers and civilians and damage to property.

Innocent Cambodians have been driven to the Thai border seeking shelter from the fighting.

Since last month Vietnamese forces have launched its dry season offensive against the encampment of Cambodian resistance forces causing a new influx of over 20,000 Cambodians into Thailand, bringing the total number of Cambodian refugees in Thailand to nearly 100,000. This has compounded the heavy refugee burden of Thailand, which is also providing temporary shelters for refugees from Laos and Vietnam. Another tragic consequence of the armed hostilities in Cambodia, which regrettably gets little international attention, is the plight of the Thais living in villages along the border who have been uprooted and displaced from their homes by the spillover of fighting and the massive influx of Cambodian refugees. This has created yet another humanitarian burden for the Thais including finding new homes for them in safer areas.

Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia, abetted and supported by the Soviet Union, has turned Southeast Asia once more into a stage for major power rivalry. By allowing the Soviet Union to use its strategic naval bases at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang, Vietnam enabled the Soviet Union to significantly increase its military capabilities in the region for intelligence monitoring and for projecting naval power. The increase of Soviet naval power in that region poses a direct challenge to the U.S. bases in the Philippines, to the supply lines through the Malacca, Sunda, Lombok, and Ombai/Wetar straits in Southeast Asian waters, and to the vital lines of communications between the U.S. mainland, Alaska, Hawaii, Japan, all of Asia, and the South Pacific. The Cambodian problem is, therefore, an international issue and not merely a regional problem. It constitutes a potentially profound direct and indirect threat to the peace and stability of Southeast Asia and beyond.

Thailand has maintained that it is necessary to restore the balance of interests which has been upset because of the Cambodian invasion and because of the continuing conflict. The prolongation of the conflict will bring greater suffering to the Cambodian people and nation. It will threaten the security and well-being of Thailand. It will ruin the prospects of regional cooperation and harmony. It will engender intensification of adverse external power rivalries in the region. It will, furthermore, affect the global power balance.

Thailand and the ASEAN countries will continue to seek an early political solution to the Cambodian problem. ASEAN has proposed several possible steps that could be taken to facilitate a comprehensive political settlement as called for in successive U.N. resolutions and the Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea. The ASEAN Joint Appeal of September 1983, for example, proposed phased troop withdrawals on a territorial basis, ceasefire in safe areas, and introduction of peacekeeping observer groups to monitor the withdrawals and ceasefire. It should now be clear to all that the onus rests with Vietnam to respond in good faith to the on-going international efforts to find a solution to the Cambodian problem. Thailand and the ASEAN



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countries will, therefore, stand firm and stay our course for we firmly believe that the course we are pursuing is in the interest of real peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

With regard to internal security, the Thai government has been successful in its dealing with the communist insurgency problem. The government has used political persuasion as opposed to mere military operations to lure communist guerrilla groups to disband or surrender to the authority. The more humane and just attitude on the part of Thai government officials and improved economic conditions in the areas prone to the communist threat are instrumental in undercutting local support for the communist insurgents. In addition, the improved relationship between the governments of Thailand and China has caused a drastic reduction in the Chinese support for anti-government guerrillas. This reduction deprived the insurgents of their much-needed external support and thereby weakened further their position.

On the political front, Thailand is moving unyieldingly toward a full-fledged democracy. The collective political will of the Thai people to make the system work should keep the democracy wheel rolling. All indications have pointed toward an increase in the Thai people's political consciousness, as well as their understanding of political mechanism and party politics. With much less fragmentation of the political parties, future governments can count on having the stability and consensus needed to manage effectively the affairs of the country.

On the economic front, our economic growth in the past two decades has been very impressive. Nevertheless, Thailand, with an open and free market economy, is heavily impacted by the external economic situation. The world economy recently experienced a period of worldwide recession. World trade was stagnant; commodity markets teetered on the verge of collapse. Rising unemployment compelled industrialized nations to resort to measures of protectionism. The situation confronting developing countries was further aggravated by high interest rates.

In adjusting to such an unhealthy economic environment, Thailand adopted a policy of monetary austerity. The results were satisfactory, particularly if viewed in comparison to situations elsewhere. Between 1981-1982 the rate of inflation was reduced from 12.7 percent to 5.2 percent while the real growth rate in 1982 was 4.2 percent and the debt service ratio to exports was managed at 16.7 percent. In 1983, the inflation was down to 3.8 percent, and the growth rate was around 5.6 percent. This year, while the recent devaluation of our currency by 14.8 percent against the dollar will probably result in some increase in the inflation rate, we expect to continue to achieve a high rate of economic growth with improved export performance. On the whole, although the continued effects of the recent world economic recession has depressed commodity prices, foreign investment and industrial development conditions in general, are improving, and Thailand appears to be emerging from this recession in a relatively stable economic position.

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In looking toward the future, Thailand will endeavor to strengthen itself politically and economically and to strengthen and consolidate cooperation amongst the ASEAN countries.

The political will which brought ASEAN into being derived from the recognition that regional cooperation was necessary in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian nations.

Today, ASEAN has emerged as a major force for peace, progress, and stability in Southeast Asia. For the future, we are hopeful that the region, with ASEAN as the core, will develop into a multi-dimensional and secure community, with all countries cooperating with one another in economic, social, cultural, and technological fields in order to promote peace, progress, and stability in Southeast Asia.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

by

**RAY S. CLINE**

Senior Associate

The Center for Strategic and International Studies  
Georgetown University

Straddling the strategic crossroads between the Pacific and Indian oceans, the Southeast Asia region has historically been a focus of major power competition and conflict. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, major European and Asian powers competed to colonize the countries of the region. After World War II, a new Asian confrontation developed. On one side was what was then a mutually supportive communist group of Asian nations, specifically North Vietnam, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Soviet Union. On the other side were a number of free countries, under the leadership of the United States, that had become involved in fighting to contain communist expansion, first in Korea and later in Vietnam.

Whereas the United States restored the status quo in South Korea, preserving a pluralistic society with a strong market economy, in Vietnam American military forces were withdrawn, and the communist regime conquered the whole country in 1975.

The security of Southeast Asia has been tragically complicated by North Vietnam's success and its subsequent military invasion and occupation of Cambodia in 1978, encouraged and supported by the Soviet Union. Needless to say tiny Laos was already dominated by Hanoi without a military struggle.

The Vietnamese move into Cambodia has endangered the security of Thailand and resulted in a punitive invasion of Vietnam by Chinese forces. A treaty between Hanoi and Moscow brought not only Soviet military and economic aid to North Vietnam but established Soviet military reconnaissance and base facilities at former U.S. installations in Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay. These developments have increasingly transformed all of East Asia and, indeed, the entire globe into one strategic theater of conflict.

The United States has an important strategic role to play in the balance of power in the region. American strategic interest in Asia, in general, and in Southeast Asia, in specific, is to ensure that no single nation or coalition of nations should control the immense resources and huge populations of the region. Therefore, U.S. policies have been to strengthen the defensive capabilities of Japan, to improve relations with the People's Republic of China, and to cooperate in every way compatible

with ASEAN's informal non-aligned structure. The aim is to counterbalance the Soviet power in East Asia.

President Reagan has said that "the twenty-first century will be the century of the Pacific," and U.S. trade with the Pacific countries is now substantially more than with all of West Europe. Significant progress has been made to restore confidence in U.S. strategic commitments since the withdrawal from Vietnam. External security challenges make it necessary for the United States to strengthen its military capabilities and those of its allies and to forge strong economic and security links with friendly nations, including the ASEAN states. It is widely recognized that a more open international economy is desirable. As the scope for expansion of interdependence increases, there must be more extensive international cooperation to manage those interdependencies.

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The conference adjourned at 4:45 p.m. on December 5, 1985.

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